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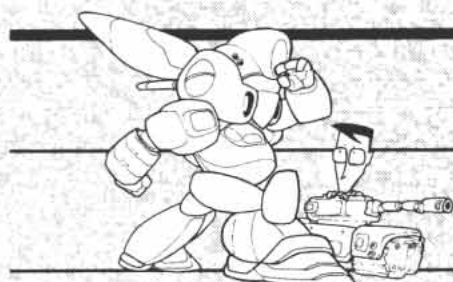
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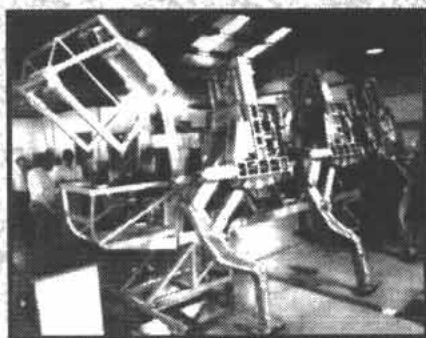
## THE QUEST FOR REALISM

As many of you know, I'm a regular reader/contributor to the *rec.games.mecha* conference on the Internet. This is a place where people from all over the world can discuss and exchange ideas about mecha gaming (or mecha in general, period) using the information super-highway.

There was a thread (Internet slang word — it's a series of messages on the same subject) about the realism of the giant piloted robot only a few weeks ago. The same thread seems to resurface every three months or so, mostly when people get bored or when new students get Internet accounts. Lots of comments and ideas were exchanged, thankfully without the mindless bashing this kind of argument always seem to degenerate into.

So are mecha a stupid idea or what? If not, why not? Many people came from all sides to bring in their comments. Some simply said: "they look cool. They're fun to play. 'Nough said". Others were outspoken, hard-core advocates of the tracked platform (what they were doing on a mecha-related group, I'll never know). Most people, however, agreed that while both tracked and legged combat platforms had some advantages, both also had equivalent disadvantages. In short, the mecha is not a stupid concept, but neither is it the king of the battlefield depicted in anime and gaming.

A perfect example of this is our current issue's spotlight, *Mobile Police Patlabor*. In that anime universe, the mecha (here called "labors") are used for specialized tasks suited to their shape, such as construction, rescue, commando-style warfare, and so on. Tanks and "conventional" vehicles are used for front-line combat. One only has to watch the opening sequences of both *Patlabor* movies to see why the tasks are divided that way!



A demonstration walker vehicle. This picture was taken in 1985.

Mecha, with their complex articulations and unstable postures, are easier to put out of action in frontal combat while tanks, by virtue of their boxy form, can take a lot more punishment. The walker also tends to be a more prominent target, a deadly sin on the modern battlefield. However, the mecha is more mobile and has access to more terrain types than a tracked or wheeled vehicle. It is also much more versatile than a limbless tank, if only for engineering purposes. In short, both types of locomotion have their uses.

My final thought on the matter, however, is that we will have to wait until the mecha has been in service for a few years before we can know their true worth. Yes, I did say when, not if — both the American and Japanese companies have been working on walker vehicles for years (see picture). It looks like we're going to see mecha in our lifetime (maybe). But don't expect to see a *Gundam* anytime soon; shows like *Patlabor* and *Votoms* are probably much closer to the mark than any 60-foot giant!

*Marc-Alexandre Vézina*

Marc-Alexandre Vézina

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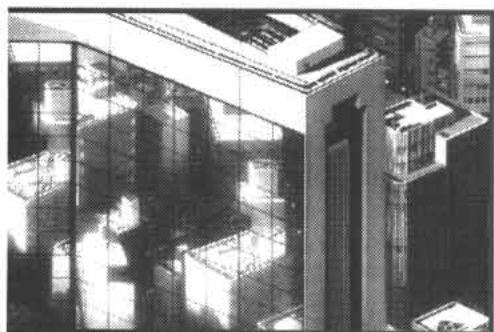
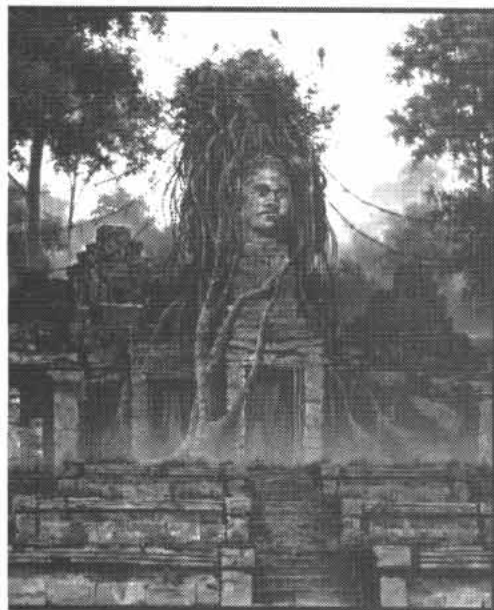
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# WHAT'S PATLABOR

By Martin Ouellette



Mobile Police Patlabor's story of success began in early 1983, when manga writer Masami Yuuki had an idea for a pet project. Up until then, giant robots had only been war machines. You could hardly take a Gundam or a Valkyrie (both over 12 meters high and bristling with weaponry) for a casual stroll down the street! These enormous machines were too "inhuman" to Yuuki, who felt the need to "humanize" them and make them part of human society and not just a high tech way of waging war. Busy with other commitments, Yuuki worked on and off on his project for nearly five years, until he decided to have it published...

Yuuki was probably quite surprised by the success of the Patlabor manga found in the pages of *Shonen Sunday*. Sold at nearly 300,000 copies, the publication made Patlabor one of the manga sensations of the late 80's.

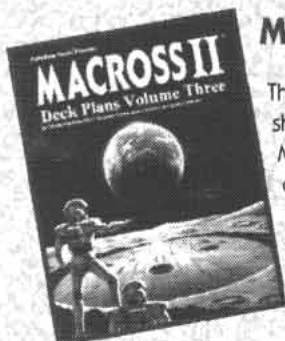
By April 1988, the manga was deemed popular enough to warrant an animated version. A series of Original Video Animations, or OVAs, were produced by a team called "Headgear", composed of director Mamoru Oshii, character designer Akemi Takada (*Kimagure Orange Road*) and mecha designer Yutaka Isubushi (*Aura Battler Dunbine*, *Char's Counterattack*). The screenplay was signed by Kazunori Ito and Yuuki himself was part of the team as overall coordinator. With the overwhelming popularity of the manga and the professionalism of the design team, it is not surprising that the first volume sold nearly 50,000 copies. In turn, that popularity generated a TV series, a second OVA run, and finally, an animated movie. Anime fans begged for more, and in 1993, a second movie was released. Placed three years after the first movie, it continued in the same mature, techno-thriller style that made Patlabor one of the best animations storywise.

One question remains: why was Patlabor, in its basic manga form, so popular? Its secret could reside in Yuuki's desire to involve the giant robots in everyday life. Most of the "Labors" are nothing more than construction vehicles. It is the fact that they can fall into malevolent hands that prompted the creation of the patrol Labor, or "Patlabor". The technology employed in the description of the Labors was also extremely realistic, which made them more credible and reliable. The characters were also extremely endearing to the readers. Just like real cops (and real people), they fought, ate and basically lived together; none of them were heroes in the real sense of the word, but just everyday people doing their job as best they could.

The merchandising that appeared later, thanks to companies such as Bandai, Kaiyodo, B-Club and a host of others, also helped to boost Patlabor's popularity even further. You could buy Patlabor T-shirts, school supplies, dinnerware, almost anything. Noa, the show's main character, even appeared in commercials for audio and video tapes. Although the second movie did not quite enjoy the same success as the first one, it remains vastly superior to its predecessors, both design-wise and story-wise. So enjoy this second foray into the Patlabor world, where giant robots are as common as cement trucks...



## PALLADIUM BOOKS



### Macross II: Deck Plans Volume Three

The final gaming guide to the mother of all space battleship, the Macross! The book also includes maps for the Moon Base, the Headquarters, and the Culture Park, plus a two-part adventure. Written and designed by the Dream Pod 9 team! Already available.

**Macross II Deck Plans Volume Three**, written by Dream Pod 9, 64 pages, cover by K. Long, art by DP9, published by Palladium Books.

### Robotech: New World Order

This all-new **Robotech** sourcebook is set in the popular Macross segment of the saga and explores the wilds of Africa. There, the players will try to root out Zentroedi rebels while fending off fiendish plots from within the RDF. Release date: March 1st.

**Robotech: New World Order**, written by Kevin Hassall, 112 pages, cover by K. Long, art by W. Breaux and V. Martin, published by Palladium Books.

### Rifts Dimension Book Three: Phase World Sourcebook

This new **Rifts** sourcebook presents more information about the Phase World. It contains additional weapons and equipment, space combat, adventures and more. Adaptable to any of the Palladium products, such as **Robotech**, **Mechanoids**, **Macross II** and many others. Release date: March 20th.

**Rifts Dimension Book Three: Phase World Sourcebook**, written by C.J. Carella, 112 pages, cover by K. Long, art by Long, Breaux, Martin and Johnson, published by Palladium Books.

### Rifts World Book Seven: Undersea

This new **Rifts** sourcebook examines the oceans of Earth and their denizens. Introduces material like undersea magic, new bionics, aquatic aliens, and much more. Release date: April 10th.

**Rifts World Book Seven: Undersea**, written by K. Siembieda and C.J. Carella, 160 pages, cover by J. Zeleznik, art by Long, Breaux, Martin and Johnson, published by Palladium Books.

## MEKTON ZETA COMING SOON



R. Talsorian Games Inc. is putting the final touches to the all-new third edition of the venerable **Mekton** roleplaying game. Streamlined, corrected and with an all new layout, this book is eagerly awaited by Mekton fans. **Mekton Zeta** will replace the **Mekton II** and **Roadstriker II** books, but remains comparable with the old system. A second edition of the **Mekton Techbook** is also coming, under the working title **Zeta Plus**. More info as it becomes available.

## NEWS & RELEASES

The coming months should prove very interesting for the science-fiction game aficionados, if only because of the sheer amount of material coming from all directions!

● **Crunchy Frog Enterprises** is releasing **Crittertek**, a hilarious stand-alone product that parodies the **Battletech** universe. Giant Tek combats, silly politics and "an epic bigger than your living room!" should make this quite popular. Not quite approved by FASA, "but at least they promised not to sue!"

● **FASA Corporation** is reediting its old **Citytech** boxed set with an all new presentation and layout. Included in the box are 16 plastic miniatures, two each of the following: *Javelin*, *Centurion*, *Orion*, *Victor*, *Uller*, *Blackhawk*, *Daishi*, and the ever-popular *Mad Car*. The box should retail for \$25.

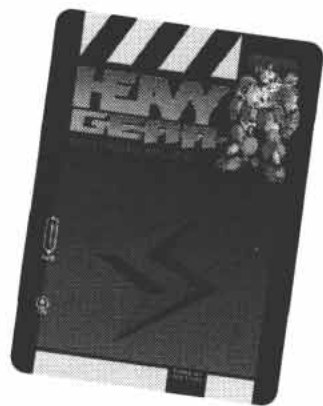
The **Black Thorns** is a sourcebook on the mercenary Black Thorns unit, their history and their rollcall. Included are stats for all major characters and scenarios to recreate the major battles from the novels **Main Event** and **D.R.T.** Listed price is \$10.

FASA is also releasing an extensive reference guide to the **Battletech** animation called the **Somerset Strikers Sourcebook**. It is choke-full of game stats, character guides, scenarios and lots of computer graphics. According to FASA, this book should count a *lot* of color pages.

● **GDW** is releasing a new edition of their science-fiction table-top combat game **Striker**. It was necessary to make the system comparable anew with **Traveller: the New Era**. The new edition, **Striker II**, is a December 1994 release and cost about \$20.

● **GURPS Robots**, by David Pulver, has just been released. A very useful sourcebook for gamemasters wanting to design anime robots such as *Giant Robo* or *Shirow's M-66* infantry robot for their **GURPS** campaign. There are also rumors of a forthcoming **GURPS Mecha**.





## HEAVY GEAR MINIATURES

The official **Heavy Gear** miniatures are coming! Manufactured by Raftm and sculpted by Stephen Koo, who also did the excellent **Jovian Chronicles** miniatures, these highly detailed 1/100 scale, multi-part gaming pieces should be very, very hot in 1995. Watch for the distinctive black and orange packages at a retailer near you very soon.

The first release will include:

- 1200 Hunter
- 1201 Hunter-A
- 1202 Jaguar
- 1203 Strike Jaguar
- 1300 Jäger
- 1301 Blitz Jäger
- 1302 Black Mamba
- 1303 Long Fang DM

## MECHA PRESS LETTER COLUMN

*Sensory Feedback* is starting to draw some letters and opinions, but we need more! We want to know what *you* have to say about mecha in gaming, modeling and in the media. Turn to page 49 for the address, and send in those letters.

## PATLABOR MOVIE SOON TO BE DUBBED

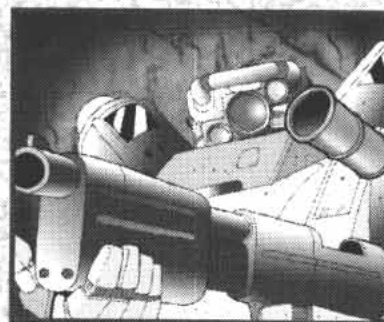
Manga Entertainment has acquired the rights to produce a dubbed version of the beautiful first **Mobile Police Patlabor** movie. It is expected to hit the shelves and the theatres sometimes this summer.

# MECHA-PRESS NEWS

## HEAVY GEAR FIGHTER

• The **Heavy Gear Fighter** cards we inserted in issue #14 were so popular that we did it again! Some entirely new cards can be found in this issue's central insert, along with the rules to use them. Turn to page 26 for more.

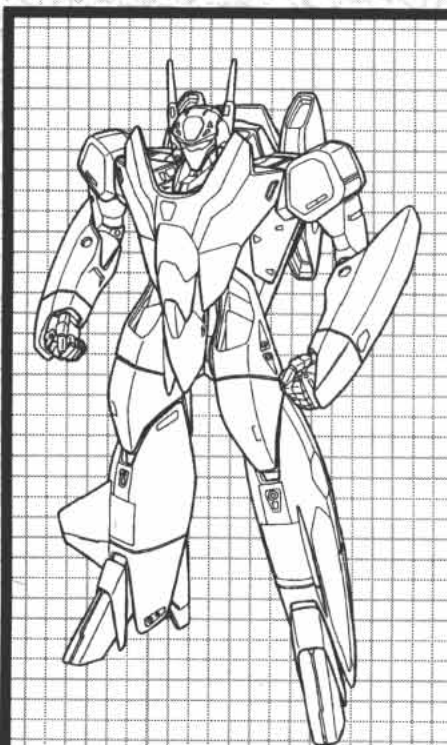
• **HGF: Weapons & Equipment™** is the first **Heavy Gear Fighter** expansion set. It contains two decks of 36 cards each: one for the Weapons, one for the Equipment. The rulebook included with the expansion set details two methods to use either one of the decks. It also includes the long-awaited multi-player rules. Now, with this expansion set, people can play HGF with as many people as they want.



Packaged in a plastic video box, the card game contains a detailed rulebook and 72 playing cards, all in full color on quality stock. You must already own a copy of **Heavy Gear Fighter: Showdown In The Badlands™** to use this expansion set. For players and card collectors. **HGF: Weapons & Equipment™** should hit the stores sometime in February.

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# MOBILE POLICE PATLABOR

When Masami Yuuki created Mobile Police Patlabor in 1983, the world of giant robots animation was quite different from what it is today. Mobile Suit Gundam, Superdimensional Fortress Macross and their ilk reigned supreme, with stories in which the giant robots were nothing else than high-tech weapons. Patlabor, if only little by little, helped to change that.

## PATLABOR STORYLINE

Patlabor's storyline originated at the beginning of the 90's, as the greenhouse effect, caused by heavy pollution, slowly started to melt the polar ice caps. This provoked a slow rise of the ocean level, thus threatening coastal cities with gradual flooding. One of the cities in question was Tokyo, Japan. Embankments and dams were started all around the world but, by far, the biggest and most exhaustive was the Babylon Project. Composed of a gargantuan assembly of dams, Babylon was to hold back the swelling waters of the Tokyo bay. Once the dam structures were in place, the water would be drained out of the bay and the now dried-out sea floor would be used for additional housing (for up to five million people according to the engineers' calculations).

The Labors entered the picture soon after the beginning of Babylon. Built with the help of advanced technology, these giant construction workers could do the work of hundreds of men at a fraction of the price and time, two extremely important advantages when a project like Babylon is under a tight schedule. Although primitive and costly at first, Labors became a common sight in Tokyo's streets. And soon, new problems arose because of them. As they became easily available, unruly construction workers (there were hundreds of thousands of men on the project and not all of them were choir boys), criminals and even terrorists could now wreak havoc with these enormous machines — up to ten meters tall in certain cases.

By 1995, a sufficient number of incidents were occurring daily for the Tokyo police department to decide to get their own Labors to counter them. The first machine, the MPL-96 *Asuka*, was put into service in October of 1996 and was followed by the MPL-97s *Python*, an anti-riot Labor. These machines were used by a corp of police officers specialized in Labor crimes: the "mobile police".

In 1998, the *Asuka* was declared obsolete, even by construction Labor standards. In April, Shinohara Heavy Industries put out a limited production run of its newest police Labor, or Patlabor as they came to be known. The AV-98 *Ingram* was put into service in Section 2 of the special vehicle division, or SVD. More advanced types soon followed, such as the AV-X0 *Type Zero* and the AV-2 *Variant*. The rest, as they say, is history.

## THE TV SERIES AND THE OVAS

Both the OVA series and the TV series describe the everyday life of SVD's Section 2. The storyline tries to be as faithful to reality as possible. The Patlabors are always being repaired (no surprise that such complicated machines need excessive maintenance), the traffic is always jammed (this is Tokyo, after all) and the efficiency of the machines is only... adequate. Since SVD is already a very costly operation for the police department, they have the cheapest work facilities one could find, with the closest restaurant 40 minutes away by car! The SVD finds it easier to grow their own vegetables, raise their own chickens and catch their own fish.

A good portion of the episodes have no mecha action at all and are much more about character development than anything else. It soon becomes obvious to the viewer that SVD is mostly composed of misfits. These characters are very endearing

# PATLABOR 2 OVERVIEW

By Martin Ouellette





as they stumble through the often confusing events happening around them.

## THE MOVIES

**Patlabor: The Movie** was an immense shock for all Patlabor fans. The TV and OVA series had been more of a realistic parody than anything else. The movie was totally different, as the situation the SVD faced was both serious and dangerous, and the animation and music were nothing less than astounding. Nobody had ever made the attempt to transfer the feeling of a live action movie to an animation to such a degree before. The attempt was so successful that **Patlabor: The Movie** won numerous awards in 1991.

And if people thought that the first movie was a masterpiece, the second one, **Patlabor 2: The Movie**, is considered to be even better, with even more realistic animation and a techno-thriller atmosphere that rivals a Tom Clancy novel.

Although the first movie was incredibly well made, the second one has proven to be even better in all respects, be it the story, the music, the character design or the backgrounds. Its atmosphere makes many live action movies pale in comparison. **Patlabor** neophytes and mecha action freaks should beware, however, as this is definitely not a movie for them. The reasons for this are threefold:

First, there is nearly no mecha action, except in the last few minutes of the movie when the police commando infiltrates the bad guys' hideout. Even then, all the action takes place in a dark tunnel, lit only by weapon fire. If you are a mecha freak, you will wait a long time for very little action.

Second, the entire movie is based on heavy character development, and if you haven't seen the first movie, some things which are obvious for a Patlabor fan will escape you. The timeline also follows the first movie. The TV and OVA series' timeline has absolutely nothing to do with it.

Third, the characters are not exactly Japanese animation standard. They are extremely realistic (even more than in the first movie) and can be slightly unsettling

because of it. If you thought the characters of **Akira** looked Japanese, you ain't seen nothing yet!

## SECOND MOVIE STORY

The events of **Patlabor 2: The Movie** happen in 2002 (three years after the first movie) but the prologue takes place in 1999, when one of the Japanese UN Labor units took a beating against guerrilla troops in southeast Asia. Yukihito Tsuge, the unit's commander and sole survivor, swore to avenge his men, thrown away by the weakness of the Japanese government, and prepared a military *coup d'état* during the next three years.

By 2002, a lot of changes have come upon section 2. Noa Izumi has left the police (and her beloved "Alphonse", an AV-98 *Ingram* Patlabor) to follow her friend Asuma Shinohara; both went to work for Shinohara Heavy Industries as Labor control software developers. Shinobu Nagumo is now a reknowned figure in the police world and gives lectures on Labor-related topics. Isao Ora has become a Labor training instructor and is still as gung-ho as ever. Mikiyasu Shinshi is now the family man he always seemed to be, and gentle Hiromi, although still in the police, now spends most of his time raising chickens for Section 2's hungry crowd. Seitaro-Sensei has retired and Shige-San has taken his place as Section 2's Chief Labor Technician. The character who has changed the least is Keiichi Goro. He is still as calm as ever and his powers of observation has not diminished.

If you watch the movie and have seen the first OVA series, it becomes evident that the *coup d'état* plot device was directly taken from it. But many differences made the movie much more interesting, especially Shinobu's involvement with Tsuge, which put her in a very awkward position, both personally and career-wise. Tsuge's plan, which consists of creating a situation of unrest and panic in the government and military structure, is complex and well-thought out. The whole movie is definitely deeply entrenched in the techno-thriller style.

When the coup starts, Tsuge and his followers attack the center of Tokyo and

isolate it completely by cutting off all bridges and train stations, as well as destroying all radio and television communication equipment. To make sure all goes smoothly, all police installations are also immobilized, Section 2's Labors included. All of this is done using *Hellhound* attack helicopters in conjunction with Zeppelin-type dirigibles equipped with ECM pods to cover the helicopters. The only thing Tsuge forgot — or underestimated — was Goro's and Shinobu's determination to stop him, as well as Section 2's adaptability and willingness to risk everything on a gamble. And Tsuge's attempt ends in a very "Patlabor" way.

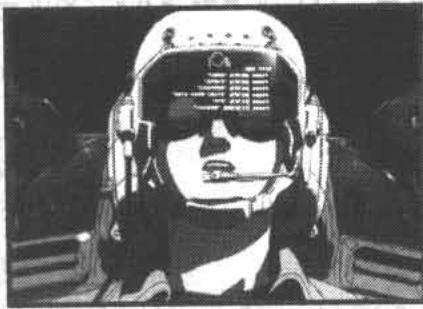
## CONCLUSION

As an overview, the characters, by Akemi Takada, are superbly done and the mecha designs of Yutaka Izubuchi, although rarely seen, are masterpieces of the genre. The participation of both Shoji Kawamori (*SDF Macross*) and Hajime Katoki (*Gundam 0083*, *V-Gundam*, *Gundam Sentinel*) also helps to give **Patlabor's** world an aura of reality unequalled as of yet in Japanese animation. The music, by Kenji Kawai (who also did the first movie's soundtrack) can be considered as one of the best movie soundtracks ever.

**Patlabor 2: The Movie** should be seen by all animation fans, even those who do not like mecha. Those not familiar with Patlabor will be able to see the first movie dubbed in English this year (by Manga Entertainment, who will also release *Macross Plus* and *Wings of Honneamise*). Hopefully, **Patlabor 2: The Movie** should follow shortly after that.







## 2002 TECHNOLOGY

By Marc A. Vezina

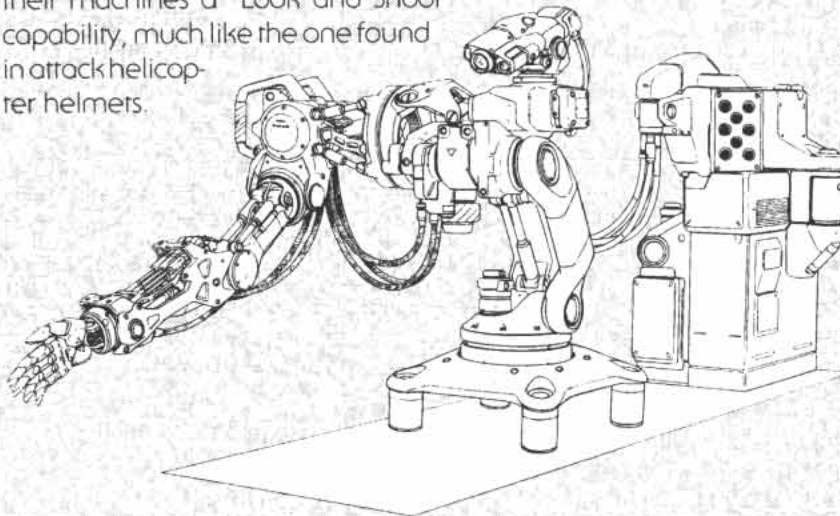
Much like computer technology, Labor technology is a rapidly evolving science. Labors that were cutting-edge only a year or two ago are now replaced by more advanced machines with even superior performance. Of course, this remains true in general for any high tech field, be it computer science or aerospace engineering.

## LABOR TECHNOLOGY

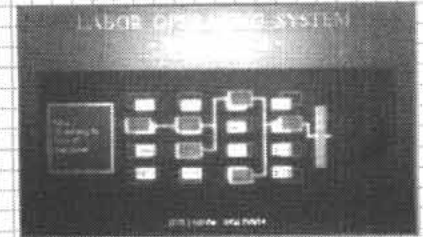
### Cockpit and control

As before, Labors are driven through a combination of joystick and pedal motions, which are then interpreted by a sophisticated computer neural network. A powerful software called the Labor Operating System handles the data. By the year 2002, the software used is the one developed in the first movie (without the virus, of course). It is commercialized under the name Hyper Operating System (HOS).

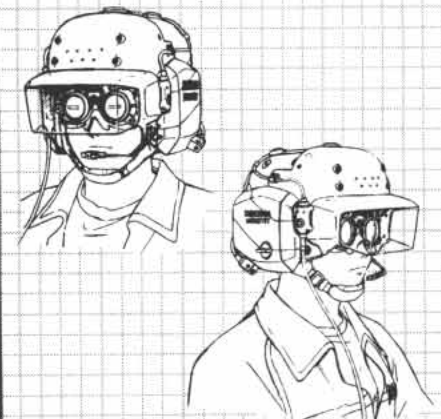
The overall interface has also been completely redesigned to simplify access to the data gathered by the sensors. The Virtual Reality helmet, first introduced in the Type Zero of the first movie (also in the Griffon, although this was the OVA's timeline), is now much more common, due to its numerous advantages. The helmet eliminates the bulky viewscreen, provides a better overall visibility and facilitates data integration and processing by superimposing vital information directly in the pilot's view. Military and police Labors also use the helmet to give their machines a "Look and Shoot" capability, much like the one found in attack helicopter helmets.



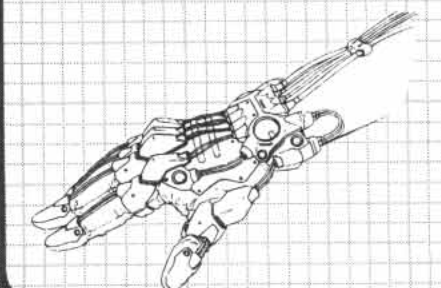
### L. O. S.



### VR Pilot's Helmet

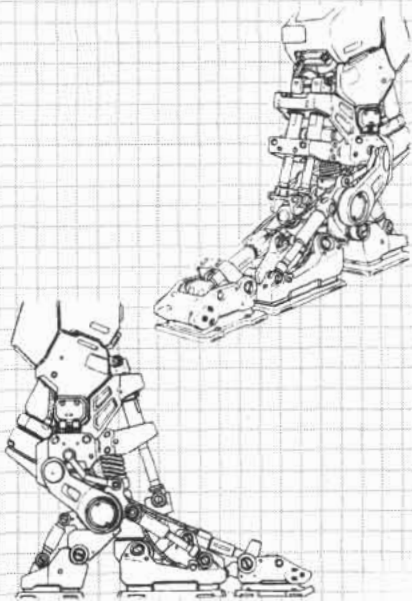


### Data Glove

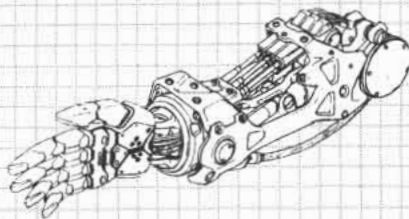




## Foot Structure



## Forearm Structure



## Thrust Vectoring

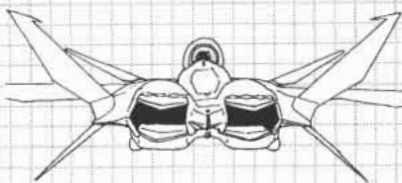


Photo: Pratt & Whitney

More advanced datagloves have replaced the clumsy waldo harnesses that were used before, to control the motions of the Labor's hands. Coupled with high precision actuators, this system gives an incredible, almost human-like dexterity to the manipulators of the new generation of humanoid Labors.

## Structure and Actuators

The basic structure of the Labor has not changed much. It is still made out of lightweight alloys and composites materials. The new generation of Labor is more flexible and contains a slightly greater amount of linkages and actuators. Power generation is moving away from internal combustion engines to the more compact and efficient superconducting batteries.

The disposition of the actuators has also been revised for increased performance. The latest Shinohara prototypes and production models now incorporate these features, especially in the feet and forearm areas. The illustrations show the AV Testbed's foot and the special integrated finger actuator block mounted in the forearm.

## AEROSPACE TECHNOLOGY

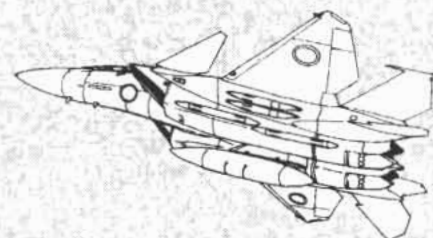
Airplanes have changed quite a bit in the years between 1995 and 2002. A better understanding of aerodynamic and the integration of computer technology, both in the design process and the airframes themselves, have led to a new generation of aircraft capable of astounding performance.

## Thrust Vectoring

Vector plates have been a major development in fighter technology in the last years of the 20th century. Although the basic concept was already well-known, it is now just getting applied to the actual designs.

A vectoring nozzle is mounted around the exhaust of the engine. By moving the flow of hot gases emerging from the engine up or down (or even sideways), the nozzle redirects it in another direction which is slightly off the normal axis of thrust. When computer-coordinated with the motions of the control surfaces, this system provides the fighter with incredible maneuverability.

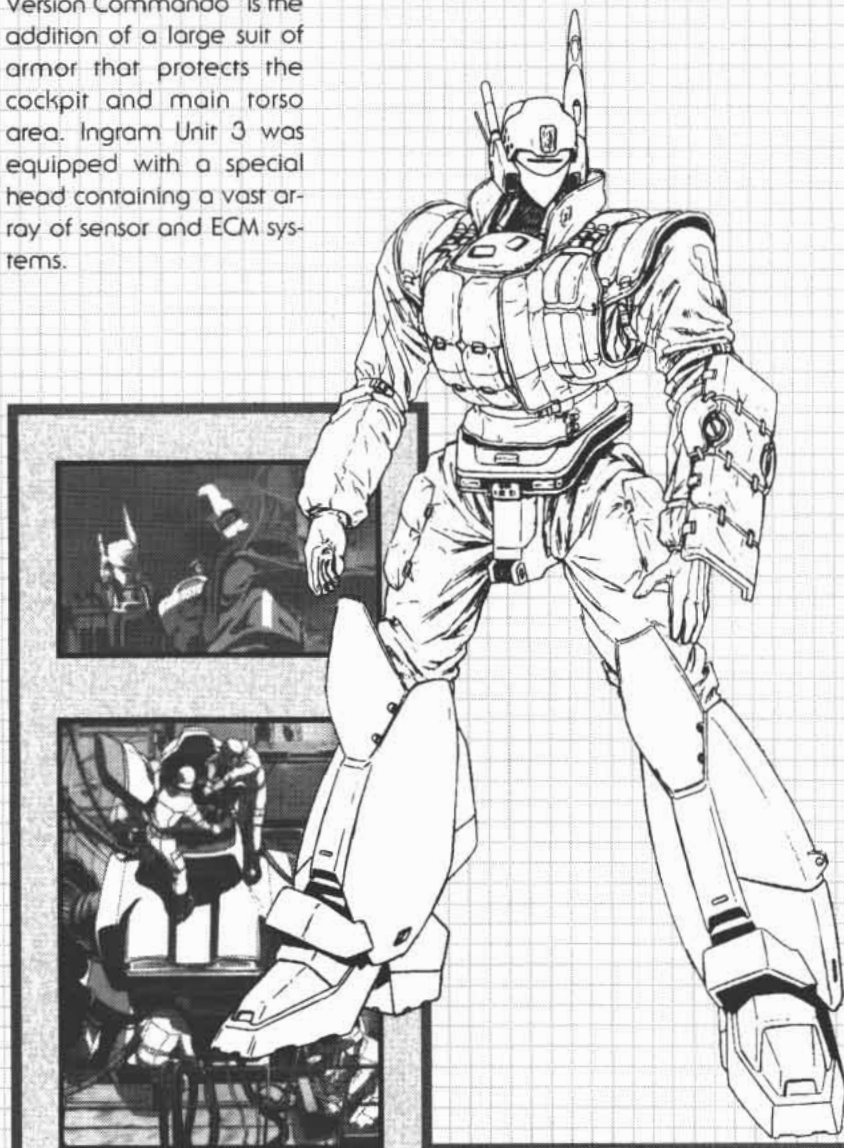
In the movie, the JASDF's F-15 Plus are equipped with such a system, as is the updated American F-16 (the JASDF's F-16 Plus and FS-X models lack the vectoring nozzle however).





## SHINOHARA AV-98 INGRAM

Once the elite mecha of the mobile police forces, the arrival of the AV-02 variant has relegated the Ingram to "stand-by" status. Although the machine's performances are still pretty good, they just don't measure up to the current standards. The only visible modification of the "2002 Mission Version Commando" is the addition of a large suit of armor that protects the cockpit and main torso area. Ingram Unit 3 was equipped with a special head containing a vast array of sensor and ECM systems.



# PATLABOR CHARACTERS

by Martin Ouellette

## SHINOBU NAGUMO



- The chief of Section One, Shinobu is the perfect example of the good cop. Brilliant, efficient and discreet, she has used the last three years to climb the ladder of the police's hierarchy. She gives lectures and is renowned as a specialist in labor-related crimes.
- Her involvement with her ex-teacher, Yuhikito Tsuge, makes her the best person to handle the attempted coup he is leading. It is also the reason why she chose to lead the infiltration commando team herself and thus risk her career. She is quite fond of Gotoh but prefers not to let anyone know about it.



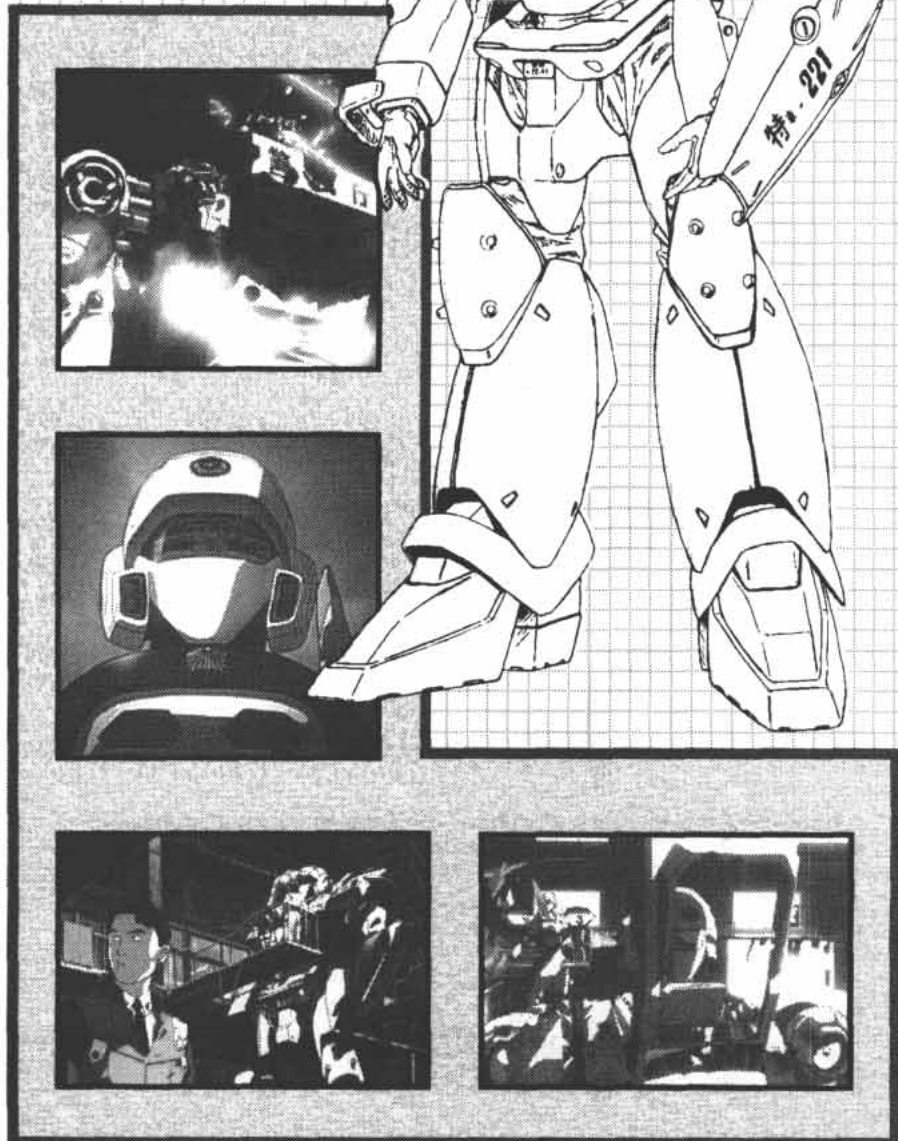
## KIICHI GOTOH



Also known as "The Knife". Gotoh, contrarily to Shinobu, has spent the three years since the "Babylon Incident" to do what he does best: nothing. Or so it would seem. His powers of observation has not diminished in the least, and he is the first to realize the importance of the situation. Just as he did three years ago, he does not hesitate to take matters into his own hands and help Shinobu counter the plans of Tsuge. The fact that he has a definite thing for her certainly helped in his decision. Lying to this man is futile — he already knows what you are thinking.

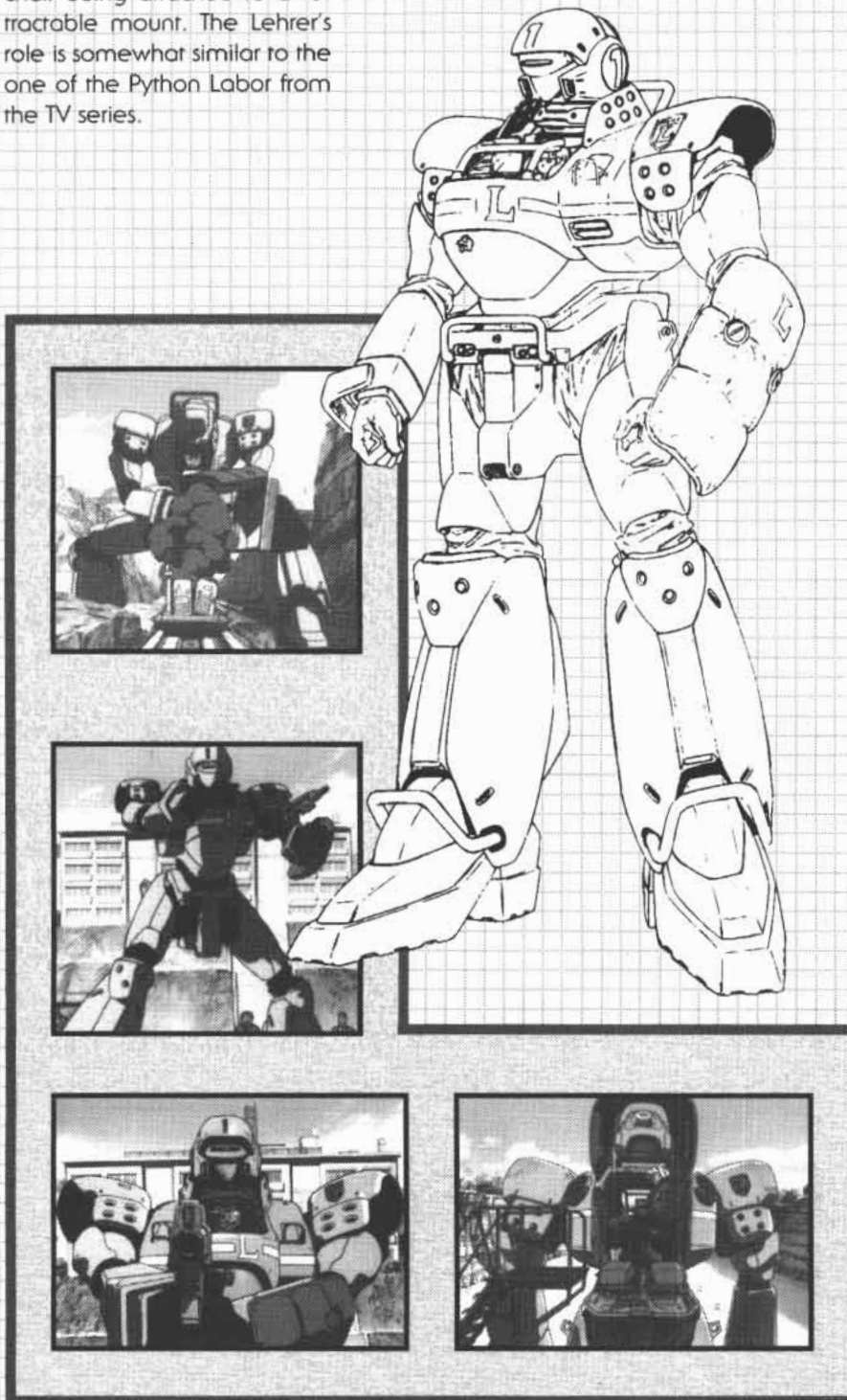
## AV-02 INGRAM VARIANT

The latest in police Labor technology, the AV-02 has succeeded the AV-98 as the elite police machine. The control system is updated with the HOS (Hyper Operation System) 0.98 "Beta" version derived from the one used by the AV-X0 Type Zero Labor prototype. The power source is more compact and efficient, making the machine lighter and more agile. The gun compartment has been moved from the right leg to the left torso. The AV-02 is slowly replacing the other police Labors, and is the movie's equivalent of the OVAs' Peace-maker Labor design.



## TRAINER LABOR LEHRER

The trainer version of the AV-02, the Lehrer is used in the police's Labor school. Chosen for its ease of maintenance, simple controls and good performance, the Lehrer is a down-graded AV-02: it lacks both the wide array of sensors and HOS system of the regular police Labor. Since it is even lighter than the other Labors, the Lehrer is very maneuverable and stable on its feet. The cockpit hatch is located in the back, with the pilot's chair being attached to a retractable mount. The Lehrer's role is somewhat similar to the one of the Python Labor from the TV series.



## NOA IZUMI



Once the "Labor Queen" of Section 2, Noa has left the police (and her beloved "Alphonse") after the events of the first movie. She now works as a labor developer at Shinohara Heavy Industries. Needless to say, she jumps at the chance to pilot Alphonse again when Gotoh offers it to her.

## ASUMA SHINOHARA



Asuma has also left the police after the "Babylon Incident" and is now doing what he once sworn he would never do: replace his father as the head of Shinohara Heavy Industries. At the present, he is chief developer for the labor motion system softwares. Asuma goes on the commando mission mostly because of Noa.



## ISAO OTAH



Otah is still in the police forces (what a surprise) and is now a teacher at the Labor Training School. He has not changed one iota and is still very much "gung-ho" in attitude. Needless to say, he is a very... enthusiastic teacher. The chance to see some real action and use his beloved riot shotgun again make him join the commando team.

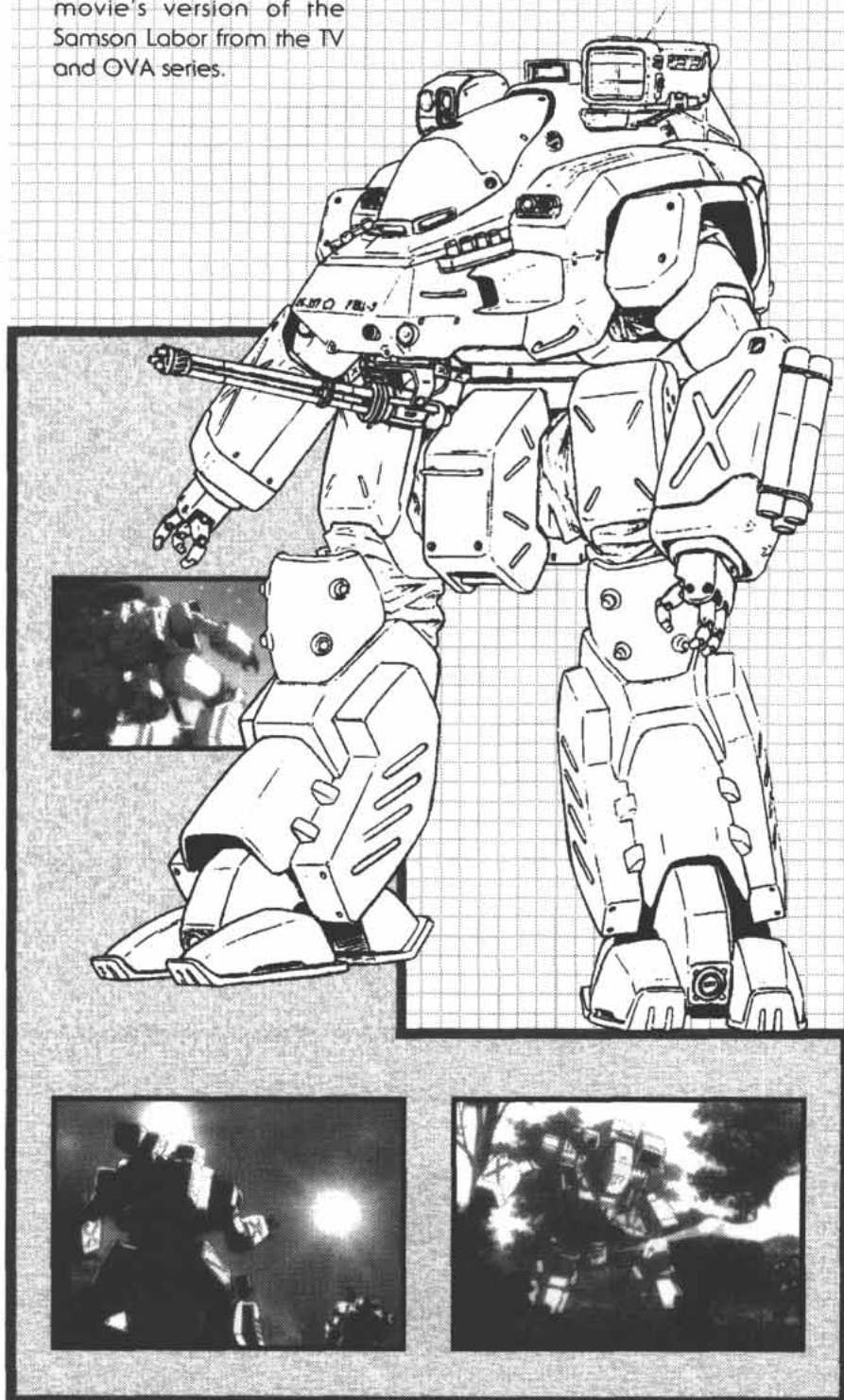
## MIKIYASU SHINSHI



Once Otah's forward, Shinshi has now settled down to a calmer life with his wife and child. He nevertheless joins his old comrades for the commando mission, an act that his wife does not exactly appreciate.

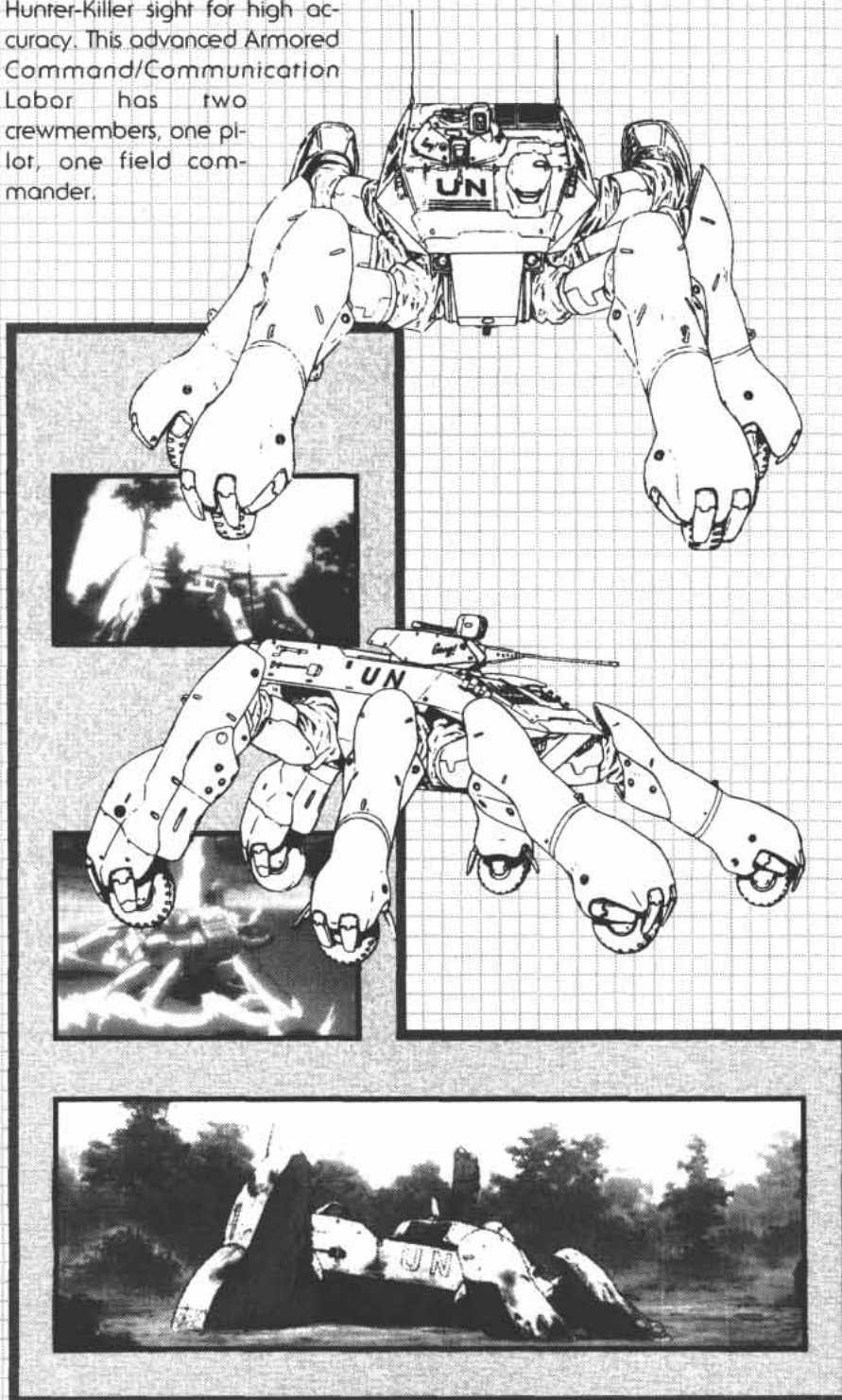
## TYPE 97 HANNIBAL

One of the heaviest military Labor in production, the Hannibal is used by both the JGSDF and the United Nations Peacekeeping Forces. Although well armed, well armored and equipped with a vast array of sensors, the Hannibal is too heavy and cumbersome for combat against a highly mobile force such as the guerrilla troops we see at the beginning of the movie. The Hannibal is the movie's version of the Samson Labor from the TV and OVA series.

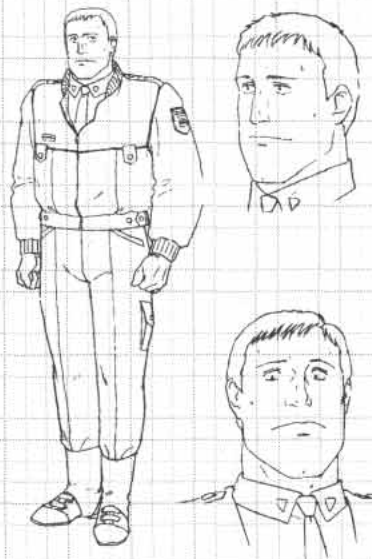


### TYPE 96 ACCL RADHA

Technically, this vehicle is simply a tank on legs instead of treads. Although its six articulated limbs can carry it over extremely rough terrain, they are more complex (and thus more fragile) than their classic counterparts. The Radha is primarily a commander vehicle, equipped with a field command computer (MIL STD Digital Databus) and extensive communication systems. It is armed with a single 25mm smoothbore cannon linked to a Hunter-Killer sight for high accuracy. This advanced Armored Command/Communication Labor has two crewmembers, one pilot, one field commander.



### HIROMI YAMAZAKI



The gentle giant of Section 2. Gotoh has given him the post of gardener and caretaker for Section 2's base, and Hiromi is content with his way of life. Just as he did during the "Babylon Incident", Hiromi accompanies the commando team and uses the 20mm anti-tank rifle that only he can handle.

### SHIGEO SHIBA



The "Labor God" of Section 2 since Sakaki's retirement, it seems that Shigeo (as his friends call him) is a slightly more benign tyrant. To his horror, his beloved labors are destroyed piecemeal right before his eyes. However, it is not so bad a tragedy since it gives him the opportunity to work on the *Ingrams* again.



## SEITARO SAKAKI



Now retired, Sakaki lives alone with his memories — his wife died not long ago. He returns to service to help Shigeo and his men make the three *Ingram* units operational as fast as possible.

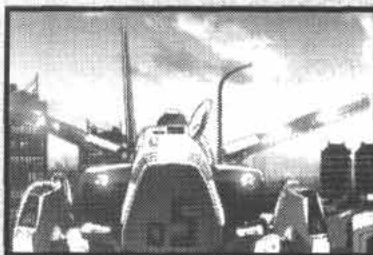
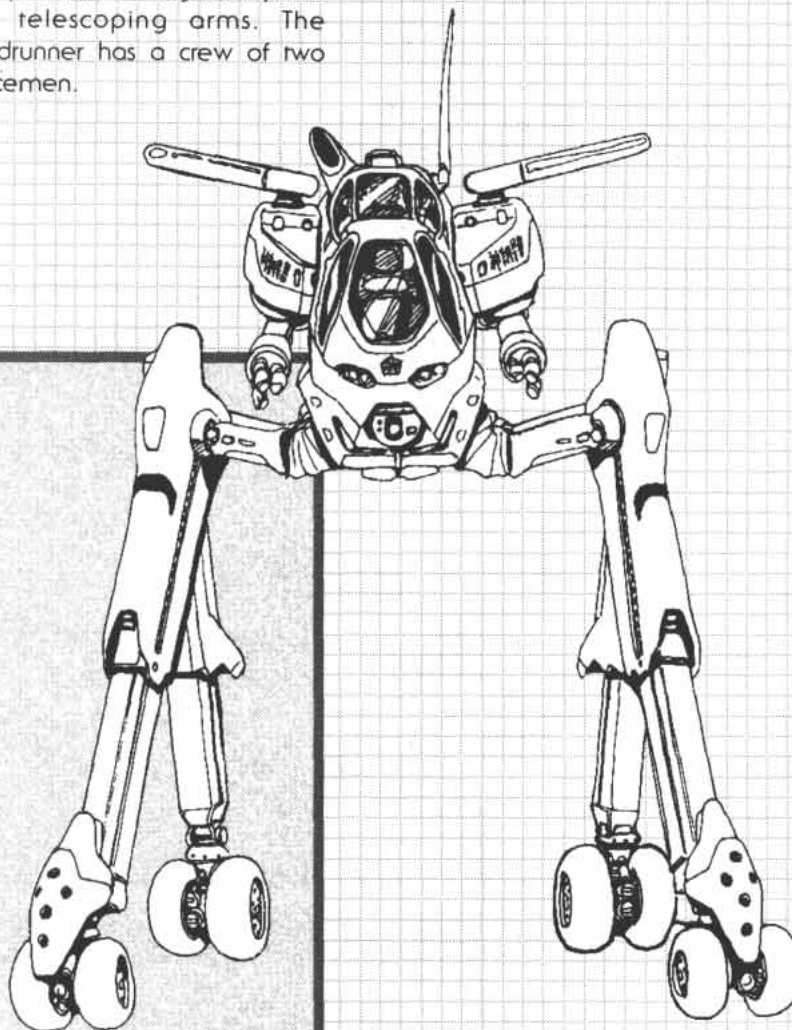
## MATSUI



Do not be fooled by the sleepy-head expression on the face of this plump little police inspector. He is nearly as fast as Gotoh and has no hesitation about taking risks. When Gotoh was contacted by Arakawa, he felt something was amiss and asked Matsui to check it out for him. At the end of the movie, Matsui has the honor of taking Arakawa in custody.

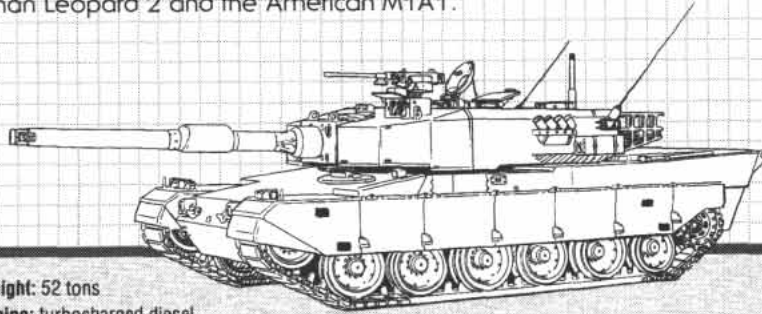
## TYPE 99 ROADRUNNER

This very specialized police Labor is used by the Tokyo Highway Patrol and is especially useful during traffic jams. The Roadrunner has two modes, "car" and "high mobility". The former needs no description, while the latter is used to clear traffic jams by extending the arms and legs to ride over the other cars on the blocked highway. This mode also allows the manipulation of objects by the two telescoping arms. The Roadrunner has a crew of two policemen.



### TYPE 90 MBT

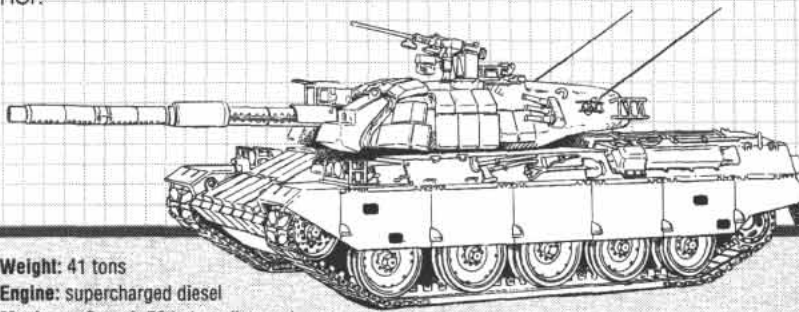
The latest tank in the JSDF's arsenal, it is similar in performance to the German Leopard 2 and the American M1A1.



**Weight:** 52 tons  
**Engine:** turbocharged diesel  
**Maximum Speed:** 72 kph on flat road  
**Armament:** 120mm smoothbore with autoloader system, 2 machineguns, smoke dischargers

### TYPE 74 MBT, IMPROVED

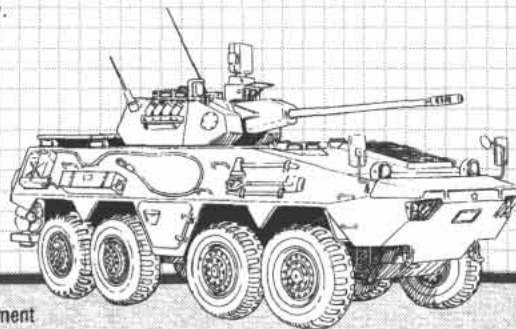
Produced during the 70-80s period, this tank is still in service. It has been retrofitted many times to keep it current and is equipped with reactive armor.



**Weight:** 41 tons  
**Engine:** supercharged diesel  
**Maximum Speed:** 50 kph on flat road  
**Armament:** 105mm L7 gun, 2 machineguns, smoke dischargers

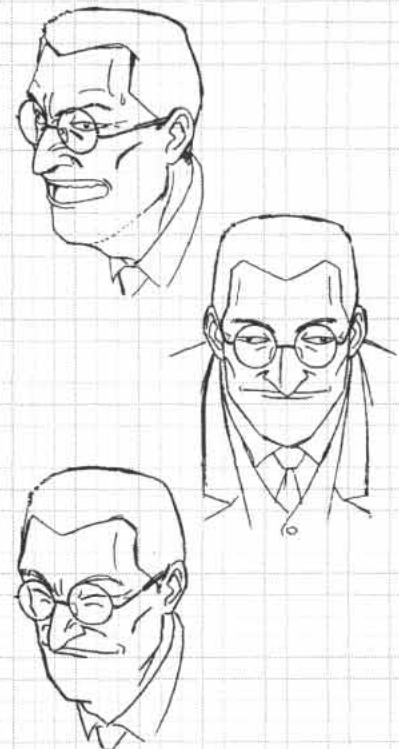
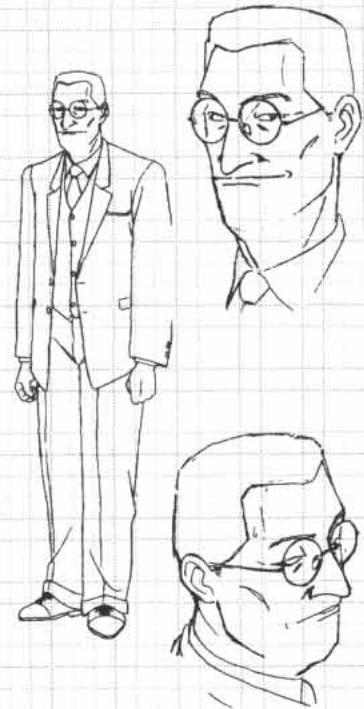
### TYPE 2 APC [8X8]

The standard Armored Personnel Carrier used by the JGSDF. It has very good overall performance.



**Crew:** 3 + 7 troopers w/ full equipment  
**Weight:** 22 tons  
**Engine:** turbocharged diesel  
**Maximum Speed:** 95 kph on flat road  
**Armament:** low recoil 35mm gun, smoke dischargers

### SHIGEKI ARAKAWA



The man charged to investigate the Bay Bridge Incident. Gotoh finds Arakawa a little suspicious and arranges for Matsui to investigate. It turns out that Arakawa is helping Tsuge mount his coup. Arakawa is imperturbable and displays as much emotion as a block of ice.



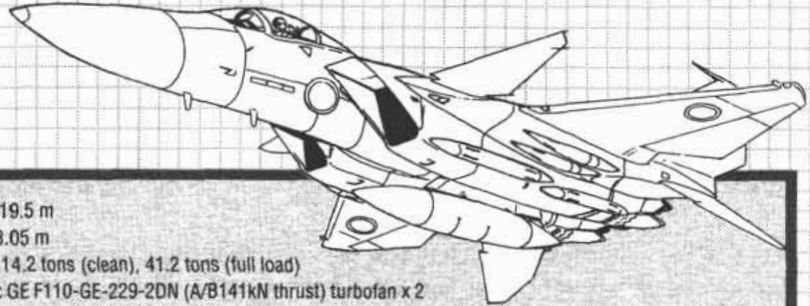
## YUKIHITO TSUGE



Once a labor squad commander in the United Nations' forces, Tsuge is now retired. He plans an elaborate coup against the political weaklings responsible for the deaths of his men — meaning the Japanese government. Tsuge has rallied some radical elements of the Japanese Self Defense Forces to his cause, hence the large quantity of top-of-the-line equipment he was able to obtain. He and Shinobu have known each other for quite sometime.

## F-15 IMPROVED "EAGLE PLUS"

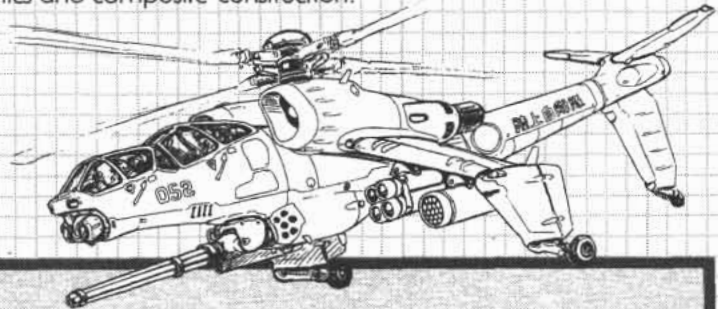
A development of the actual F-15E, the Eagle Plus is equipped with vectored thruster ports, "canard" control surfaces and advanced avionics. Weapons are contained in internal or semi-enclosed bays.



**Length:** 19.5 m  
**Span:** 13.05 m  
**Weight:** 14.2 tons (clean), 41.2 tons (full load)  
**Engines:** GE F110-GE-229-2DN (A/B141kN thrust) turbofan x 2  
**Maximum Speed:** Mach 2.5, Mach 0.95 at sea level

## HELLHOUND ATTACK HELICOPTER

An updated version of the AFH-02B helicopter from the first movie, with better avionics and composite construction.



**Length:** 16.6 m  
**Weight:** 6.2 tons (estimated)  
**Engines:** LHTEC T900-LHT-900 turbine x 2  
**Armament:** 3-barrel gatling cannon, four wing hardpoints

## UTILITY HELICOPTER

The JASDF's standard aerial troop transport vehicle.



**Crew:** 60 (max)  
**Length:** 32 m  
**Weight:** 16 tons  
**Engine:** AL5512 turbine x 2  
**Maximum Speed:** 240 knots



## 'GUINNESS' C1/ZETA GUNDAM

by Duncan Scott

This article will explain how the C1/Zeta Gundam variant shown in the pictures was made. It is basically a standard C1 upgraded with Nu Gundam-style weapons and maneuverability. Although you may not wish to produce this particular mobile suit variation, the information provided here and the techniques used apply to every model you'll ever produce.

### PREPARATION

This kit is based on a Bandai 1/144 scale Zeta Plus C1 plastic model from Bandai's *Gundam Sentinel* line. Some of the parts used were taken from existing plastic model kits. Others were resin castings (molds were made then pieces were duplicated) of pieces from other kits with the originals being returned unharmed to their native kits.

Using Dow Corning H53 silicon, molds were made of the originals for the pieces that were duplicated. H53 is perfect for molding small and highly detailed pieces. Once cured (overnight), the silicon has perfect memory, and its elasticity and high amount of "give" without tearing make it suitable for one piece "drop" molds. The hole where you remove the piece from will stretch three to four times its normal size and not only not rear, but also return to its previous form without any distortion in the mold.

The duplicate pieces themselves were cast with Smooth On C-1511 Resin. It is perfect for use with high detail molds as it sets in two hours, giving you plenty of time to manually work out any air bubbles with a toothpick. If you don't anticipate too many air bubbles or are casting simple pieces, use Smooth On 1505 which hardens and can be de-molded in an hour.

A note about using silicones and resins: though they give you exactly what you want in terms of highly detailed duplicate parts and are safe to use (if you get any on your hands just rinse it off before it hardens), remember these are industrial chemicals that are flammable and would probably prove fatal if swallowed. So use common sense and keep them away from pets and children while in their liquid form.

### CONSTRUCTION

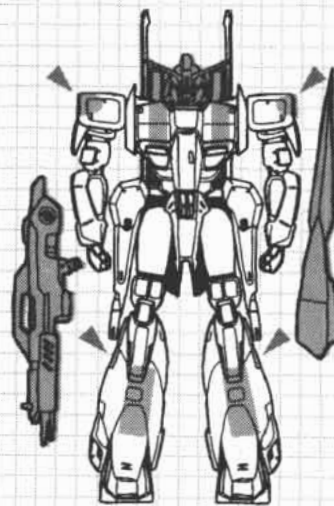
Construct the Zeta Plus C1 as instructed except for the head, thruster packs, and propellant tanks. The propellant tanks can be discarded to your spare parts box along with the Hyper Mega Launcher and plastic components of the head.

Take the head and shield from the 1/144 HG Zeta Gundam kit. Place the polyethylene river that was supposed to go into the C1 head into the HG Zeta head and mount the resulting assembly on the C1 neck piece. Cut the finger ring of the 1/144 Nu Gundam beam rifle near the hand grip with a sharp X-Acto knife. Carve the inside of the right hand to fit the beam rifle grip.



This back view of the mobile suit shows off the modified backpack with enlarged thrusters. Note that the usual C1 fuel tanks are not carried.

### ADDED PARTS

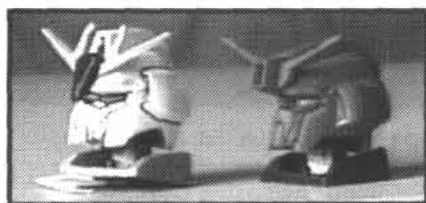


This diagram shows where parts have been added or modified on the C1 kit. The grey-shaded areas represent the new parts in their proper position.

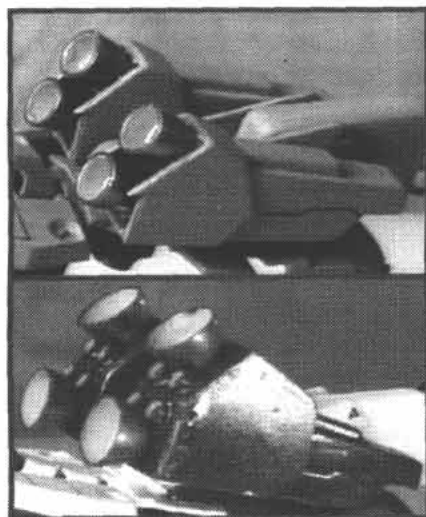
### COMPONENT SOURCE LISTING

- Base Kit:
  - Bandai 1/144 scale Zeta Plus C1
- Parts From:
  - Bandai 1/144 High Grade Zeta Gundam;
  - Bandai 1/144 Nu Gundam;
- Molded Parts From:
  - Bandai 1/144 Gundam FAZZ
  - Bandai 1/100 Vigna Ghina
  - Bandai 1/144 Gundam ZZ
  - Bandai 1/100 Perfect Gundam
- Suggested Molding Products:
  - Dow Corning H53 Silicon
  - Smooth On C-1511 Resin
  - or Smooth On 1505 Resin

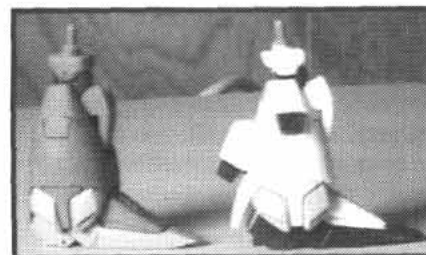




The head at right is the original C1's. The left-most assembly is the finished Zeta head mounted on the C1's neck unit. Note the black shading in the engraved detail.



These diagrams and illustrations show the difference between the original and the converted backpack. The ZZ thruster pack caps are barely visible, as they support the large thruster cones from the 1/100 Perfect Gundam. The sheet styrene extensions along the sides and top of the new booster units are clearly visible when placed side-by-side with the unmodified C1 backpack.



The part at left is the original C1 leg. The added thrusters are plainly visible on the modified leg at right.

Right: The model was carefully assembled to retain its full mobility. It can thus transform into its Waverider form.

Place two of the molded ZZ thruster pack caps together along the thick edge (if they are resin, use JET or some other high strength super glue). Place the large thruster cones from the 1/100 Perfect Gundam (copies, again) over the holes on the ZZ pieces and glue them one each onto the back of the C1 thruster packs. Use 1/16 or 1/32 sheet styrene to build up the sides and top of the thruster pack to be even with the attached pieces, putty the cracks and sand smooth with 200, 400, and finally 1200 grit sandpaper in succession.

Attach the molded Fazz leg thrusters to the back of the C1 legs just above the lower leg back armor flap, once again putty and sand. Attach the molded Vigna Ghina square apogee motor to the outer sides of the legs as shown, putty and sand. Finally, attach the molded ZZ Gundam's crotch apogee motors to the outside of the shoulder covers of the Zeta Plus, putty and sand.

## PAINTING

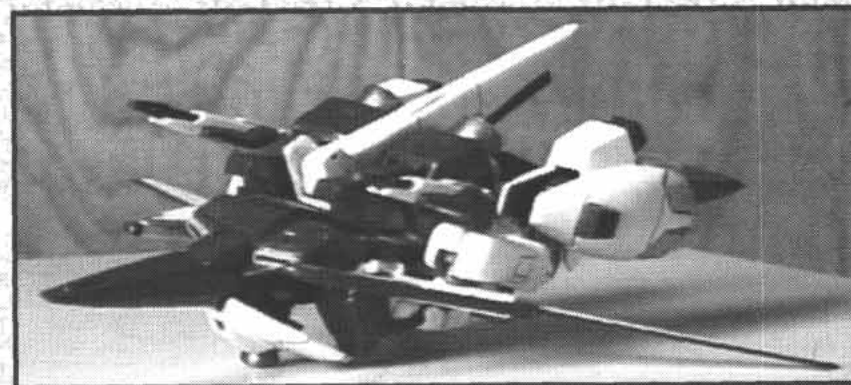
Now you have the construction part of the model completed. Now onto the part that makes or breaks any model — the paint job. Spray the entire model with Testors (or your favorite brand) Flat White. Make sure to hold the can [or the airbrush, Ed.] at least 10 inches away from the model when spraying and do only light coats. This will avoid the paint locking the plastic joints when it dries. Do three separate light coats, sprayed at least six hours apart. This should give the model a nice even finish — remember to rotate all the joints before each coat to ensure complete coverage.

After the base coat is thoroughly dry, begin painting on the detail using the chosen colors, from lightest to darkest. Begin with Testors Model Master Insignia Yellow for the insides of the thruster cones, chest thrusters, head antennae array, and the leg apogee motors. Next use a Tamiya or Gunze Sanyo gloss green for the eyes and targeting sensors. Use Tamiya Gun Metal for the outside of the thruster and all joints. Finally the bottoms of the feet, chest, back shoulders, back packs, and edges of wings were done with a Gunze Sanyo Phthalo Cyanine Blue. Note that you can paint flat or gloss paints over a flat surface, but never paint flats over gloss — you will end up stripping the piece and starting over.

## FINISHING TOUCH

Now to give it that truly animated look: take a Rapidograph (which is an ultra fine ink pen available at most art stores), fill it with waterproof black india ink, and run it along all the cracks and indented detail you want to highlight (especially the head).

As a final touch, we will use Chart Pak rub on stencil lettering on the wings and feet. Cut out the letters you want and arrange them in order. Pick them up on a piece of transparent tape. Once you've taped them in place you can rub them on and remove the tape. Apply a coat of flat varnish over the letters to seal them in place, and your model is complete. This model was named after its creator's favorite beverage.



## CHANGING OMNIMECHS' CONFIGURATIONS

By Marc A. Vezina

One of the major characteristics of the advanced Battletechs used by the invading Clans is their modularity. Equipment and weaponry are mounted in "pods" which can be freely exchanged between missions, facilitating resupply and repair while providing extreme versatility.

Ral Partha has now released all of the basic sixteen designs in wide use. By swapping parts and doing some kitbashing, the modeler can easily convert the standard designs offered in the Technical Readout 3050. This article offers suggestions on building a few of these versions.

**NAME:** Dasher  
**TONNAGE:** 20 tons **CONFIGURATION:** C  
**COMPONENTS:** Dasher kit, Koshi's arms



The fire support version of the *Dasher* sports twin LRM 5 launchers, one in each arm. Replace the *Dasher's* arms with those of the *Koshi*. The torso Anti-Missile System is made out of styrene sprue, shaped to look like a radome. This is attached to the right torso, just above the small gun barrel already in place.

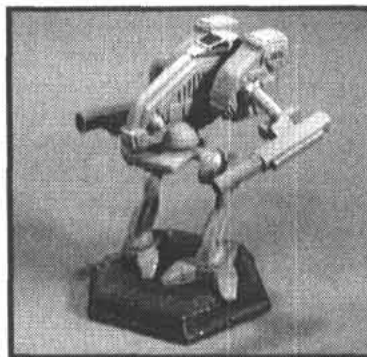
**NAME:** Koshi  
**TONNAGE:** 25 tons **CONFIGURATION:** A  
**COMPONENTS:** Koshi kit, Dasher's arms



The spotter version of the *Koshi* is easily made using the discarded arms of the *Dasher*. The arms are first reversed by cutting off the fists and placing them in a more natural position. Glue the modified arms to the *Koshi's* torso. Make a small styrene dome and glue it to the left arm to represent the interception radar of the twin AMSs. Add a bit of tubing for the TAG system.

The right arm is left unchanged (the barrels now represent a flamer and a machine gun). The A-Pods on the legs are best represented by a series of small styrene squares, much like the reactive armor of today's tanks. Paint them a contrasting color, then add thin lines of white to imitate stenciled markings on their surface.

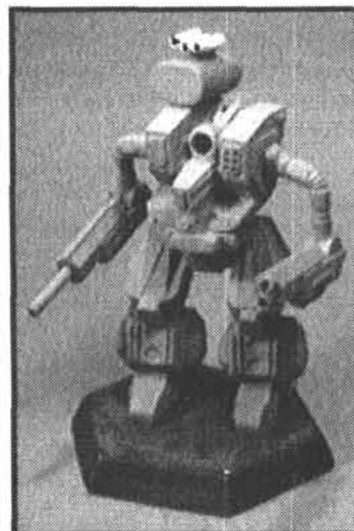
**NAME:** Vulture  
**TONNAGE:** 60 tons **CONFIGURATION:** A  
**COMPONENTS:** Vulture kit, PPC arm, styrene bits and tubing



The *Vulture-A* is not very different from the primary configuration. Although the Long Range Missile racks are replaced by Short Range versions, both fit under the shoulders' armored doors and so are not visible.

The right arm sports a PPC, so a spare arm was salvaged from another conversion and glued in place. The connector pin is standardized, making this a simple operation. The left arm mounts a small autocannon which is represented by two lengths of styrene tube dressed up with bits of styrene. Cut off the *Vulture's* lasers and glue this instead on the arm. Put the discarded lasers in your spare part box.

**NAME:** Loki  
**TONNAGE:** 65 tons **CONFIGURATION:** A  
**COMPONENTS:** Loki kit, styrene tubing, spare parts



The *Loki-A* involves quite a bit of work, but most of the modifications are simple. Both the arms and main body require a few changes.

The left arm remains as is, except that the end is filled with putty and two small pieces of tubing are glued to represent the twin Large Lasers mounted there. The right arm's ER PPC is drilled out and a piece of tubing inserted to represent the UAC/5 mounted there.

The left torso's Narc Beacon launcher is a simple styrene plate with six holes in it, glued to the torso plate. The right torso's LRM 20 launcher came straight from the spare part box. It used to be a 1/144 Dougram *Blockhead* launcher, now redressed with a new frontal plate. A *Mad Cat* shoulder launcher could also be used. The triple machinegun mount is a contraption made of several small pieces of tubing — also from the bit box — glued on top of the LRM launcher.



**NAME:** Ryoken

**TONNAGE:** 55 tons **CONFIGURATION:** B

**COMPONENTS:** Ryoken kit, Autocannon arm, Black Hawk's right arm



The *Ryoken-B* is one of the easiest configurations to model. There is no great modification to the main body or the structure of the machine.

Remove the torso-mounted missile ports — the *Ryoken-B* does not carry any missile-delivery system. A styrene plate with an X-pattern scribed on it represent the new armor plate covering the empty missile bay. The X-pattern is there only as a cosmetic detail and can be omitted.

The autocannon arm goes to the left to represent an UAC/20. The *Black Hawk's* right arm is glued opposite, unmodified — the *Ryoken-B* has six lasers too. A small piece of styrene tubing, about 3 mm in diameter and 3 mm long, serves to extend the shoulder pin for proper clearance.

**NAME:** Dragonfly

**TONNAGE:** 40 tons **CONFIGURATION:** B

**COMPONENTS:** Dragonfly kit, Fenris' left arm, Ryoken's right arm



The conversion to this configuration is relatively simple, as it only involves swapping arms with two other kits and adding small pieces of tubing to the main body of the Omnimech.

Assemble the kit normally, but put the arms in your spare parts box. Use the arms listed above instead. The *Fenris'* arm is used as is, but the *Ryoken's* sports two laser muzzles where there should be just one. One of the barrels was simply removed. If you prefer, remove both barrels and replace them with a single small piece of styrene tubing. Another piece of tubing is glued to the left torso to represent the second Small Pulse Laser.

**NAME:** Daishi

**TONNAGE:** 100 tons **CONFIGURATION:** B

**COMPONENTS:** Daishi kit, styrene tubes and box



The *Daishi-B* sports a large quadruple AC/2 mount on its left torso, described in the **Tech Readout 3050** as a "boxy turret". The arm pods also carry a different armament.

The turret was made out of an old plastic armor plate left over from a kit, but a simple styrene bloc will do just as well. The AC/2 barrels were made out of the front end of four Citadel lasguns from its Imperial Guards plastic kit. This apparatus was then glued to the top of the left torso missile launcher, whose missiles had been previously removed.

The arms were simpler to modify. A small handsaw was used to cut off the molded barrels, which were then replaced by short styrene tubes (see picture). The two torso gun ports were filled with putty since the B configuration does not mount any gun there. The rest of the kit was assembled as usual.



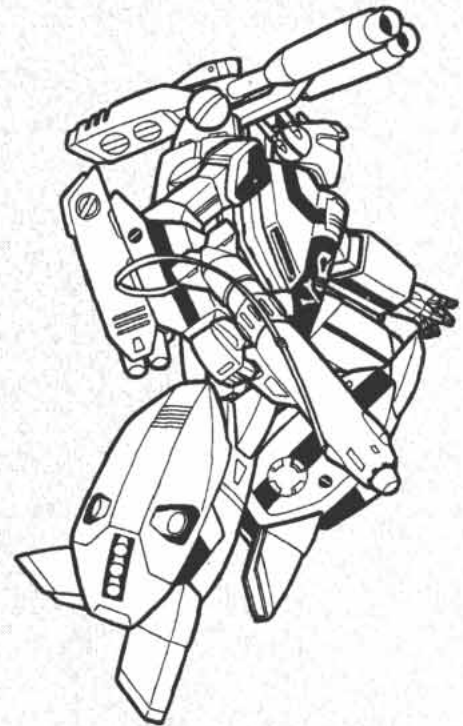
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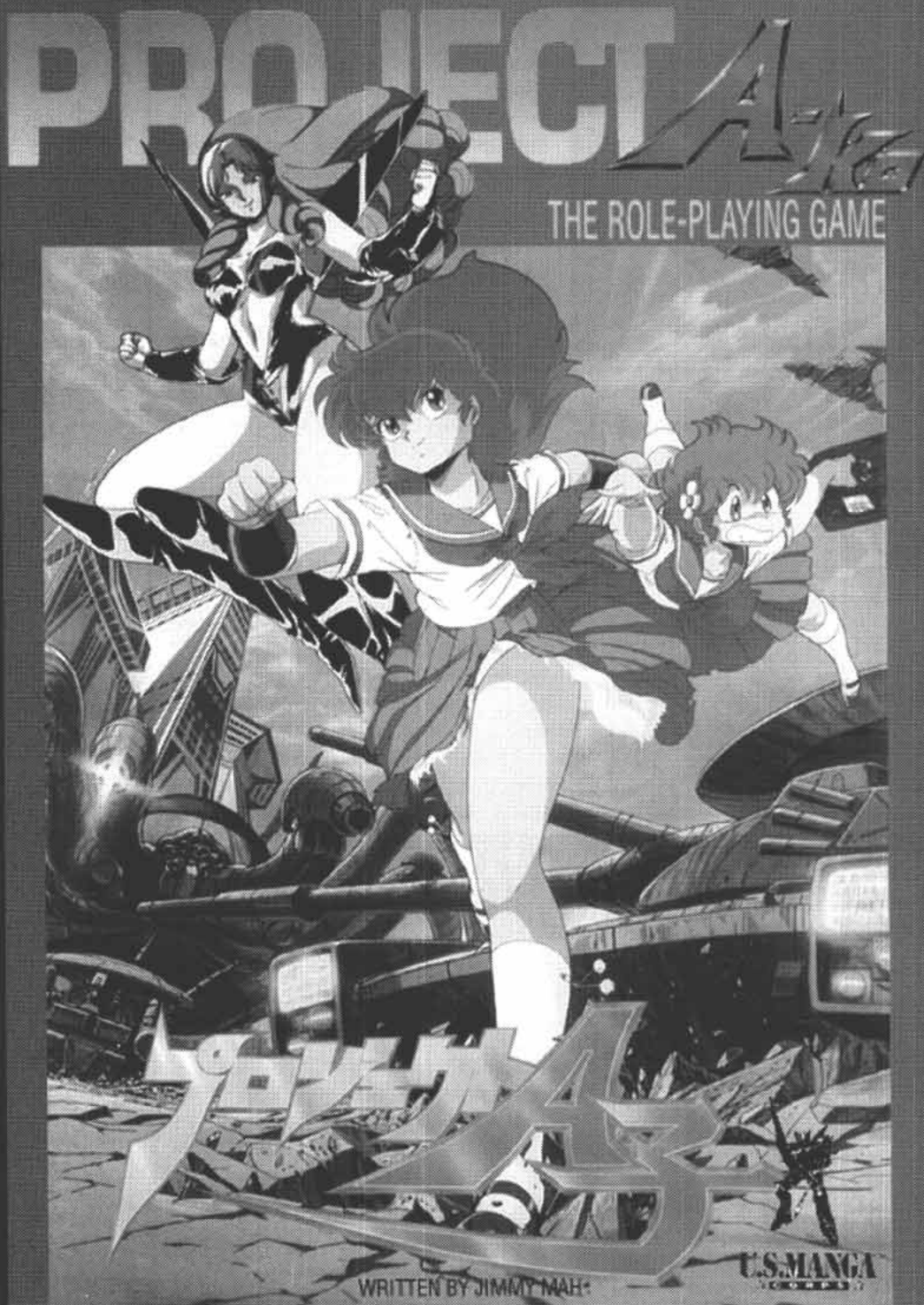
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# NOW YOU CAN BE PART OF THE ADVENTURE

PROTOCOLCULTURE ADDICTS PRESENTS



## COMING THIS MARCH



## ARMORED TROOPER VOTOMS

by Martin Ouellette

### Episode 21: Upstream

As the task force moves on the river, Potaria confesses some foreboding thoughts about the mission's difficulties. Reaching the Palace will be no party. His conversation with Chirico is interrupted by the fly-by of a Bera helicopter. Kidera wants to shoot it down but Chirico orders him not to, not wanting to reveal their presence to the Bera.

Not long after this incident, a peasant boat comes toward them. Kuan Yu, ever zealous, want to check it out on the off-chance that it is a Bera weapon transport. Chirico refuses but relents when Kuan Yu's reasons make sense. If the ship is a civilian vessel, it won't represent any danger. If it isn't, a new load of weapons will find itself in Bera hands. After searching the ship and finding nothing, Kuan Yu lets them go. He then fires on the vessel with the ship's cannons. The peasant boat explodes violently in a geyser of flames, proof that it was indeed carrying weapons and ammunition.

Back at the Palace, Kansielman presides a strategy conference. Ypsilon insists on A.T. strikes but is rebuked by Boro, who tells him that it is not his place to intervene. Meanwhile, Chirico and the task force arrives at Ramo village. Kuan Yu wants to investigate the possible presence of Bera soldiers and insists so much that Chirico, bored to tears, gives him back his command. Kuan Yu orders a search of the perimeter but the soldiers come back empty-handed. The task force falls back to the ship. Kuan Yu notices a boat similar to the one they intercepted earlier and fires on it. The boat explodes the same way as the other one. This is when the Bera soldiers, who had been hiding all around the village, decide to strike.

The battle is furious and Kuan Yu fails in his attempt to protect the task force's boat. After the battle, he tries to put the blame of the loss on Chirico. Vanilla, now a pilot for EX-10, lands in his chopper and starts to make his report to Chirico. Chirico interrupts him and tells him that Yu is now the commander. He watches Vanilla talk to Kuan Yu and sadly reflects that all his friends are caught in his war...

### Episode 22: Defection

Since the task force has blown its cover, Gon Ner arranges for a new mode of transportation that will avoid the river, which is probably scoured by the Bera guerrillas. A squadron of transport helicopters will ferry the men and their A.T. a little further toward their objective and then drop them to continue on their own. The only thing Gon Ner doesn't like is that the transports can be easily spotted while airborne, and any element of surprise left may be lost.

When the transports arrive at Ramo, the team hooks up with them and take to the air. They are watched by the population, who quickly transmit the information to Kansielman. At the palace, Boro tells Ypsilon that Proto-One cannot be trusted anymore and that Ypsilon himself will have to take care of Chirico. Ypsilon relishes the idea of exterminating his nemesis.

As Chirico's team flies over the jungle, Paul Potaria tries to convince Kuan Yu of the futility of their mission: he is sure that the Bera is waiting for them. Chirico agrees and fears that the blue A.T. will be there too. The only event of the trip is a short attack by an armored Bera patrol. It is quickly dealt with, but not before one of the troopers manage to get a radio warning to the palace. When Chirico's team arrives at the drop point, they embark on an armored barge to go on to their final destination.

At Krummen's royal palace, Proto-One learns that Ypsilon will be hunting Chirico down: she secretly wishes Chirico good luck. During a strategy meeting, Ypsilon gets upset when he learns that Boro wants to take Proto-One on the site of the upcoming battle. A moment later, as he discuss with Boro in the altar chamber, Boro switches on a small hidden video screen. Albert Kiri appears on it. As Kiri explains his plans and the secret society's involvement in the ongoing events, Ypsilon sees that his role is an all important one. He must destroy Chirico to both save Kiri's plans and to wipe Chirico's imprint from the mind of Proto-One, turning her into a fighter once more. His own personal motive — his love for Fyana — remains hidden from the others.

Back at Crescent River, Chirico and the others prepare their machines as they get near their landing point. The Bera attack at the same moment: as Chirico opens fire, he spots Boro's chopper with Fyana in it. He quickly forgets about them as Ypsilon's blue A.T. arrives. The battle is furious and Ypsilon knocks Chirico's *Marshydog* down. Horrified, Fyana lunges at the chopper's controls in a desperate attempt to save Chirico, sending it in a dive straight for Ypsilon's A.T. The chopper knocks the blue A.T. off its feet, slams into the river bank and explodes. Chirico looks on, unable to do anything.

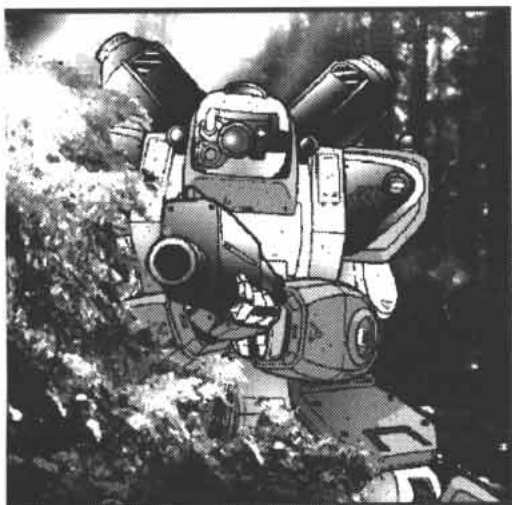
## HG FIGHTER FORTUNE CARDS

by Jean Carrières

Not everything in combat can turn bad. Some unexpected things may make your Heavy Gear better and more efficient. This is represented by the **Fortune** cards (as in "good fortune"). They can be played at any time during a Turn, and usually last until the end of the Turn, unless specified otherwise.

The first thing to do is to take them out of the magazine. They must be carefully cut following the white hairline on the inside of the cards. We strongly recommend the use of a very sharp hobby knife and a metal ruler. Take your time while cutting the cards out. Although it is of no great importance, it would be best to avoid damaging them in any way which would make the **Fortune** cards recognizable from the back. For our own in-house use, we traced a deep cut with the knife along the dotted line, then carefully used scissors to avoid ripping the cards' edges.

Without further ado, here are the cards' definitions:



### Terrain Advantage:

This card cancels the Slow card from the **Mishap** card set published in MP #14. If used by itself, it halves the costs for movement from one range to the other (1 Action to go to Medium Range, 2 Actions to go to Long Range). The minimum Action Cost to go anywhere is 1, no matter what other cards are combined with this one. Lasts until the end of this Turn.

### Honorable Fight:

Providing you accept to do NO Combo this Turn, you can perform all your Moves at -1 Action (minimum 1, as usual) and at +1 Overload. Lasts until the end of this Turn.

### Glance:

You can look at an opponent's unturned Equipment or Weapon cards. You must select EITHER the Equipment or the Weapon cards, but not both. Discarded upon use.

### Friendly Advice:

You can look at an half of an opponent's current hand (round up in your favor). The opponent shows you the cards of his choice. Discarded upon use.

### Fumble:

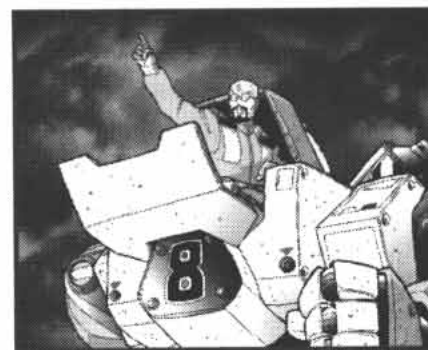
This card can be played against a Pattern Strategy card. You luckily stumble out of the way and your opponent cannot finish his Pattern. He plays the first card normally (and does a normal Move), but loses the second one (he does not have to pay the AC for the second card, however). Discarded upon use.

### Unexpected Cover:

You find yourself partially covered. Your Defensive Cards (blue) become automatically Defense: All. Lasts until the end of this Turn.

### Forward Observer:

Forward observer information allows you to target High, Torso or Low on your



opponent with any of your Moves, whether they have a specified location (H, T or L) or not. Lasts until the end of this Turn.

### Jury Rig:

Any Destroyed Equipment Card may be kept until the end of NEXT Turn. Must be played as soon as the Equipment is destroyed.

### Experimental Drugs:

The pilot is injected a special booster drug to temporarily prevent disorientation. Remove half the Overload taken (rounded up). Discarded upon use.

### Shortcut:

Move anywhere for 1 Action Cost. Lasts until the end of this Turn.

### Scrounged Ammo:

The pilot scrounges ammo lost on the battlefield. +2 uses to any Move with a Limited Use #. Discarded upon use.

### Mirage:

A desert illusion creates a mirror image of yourself, which your opponent attacks. Flip a coin. Heads: the mirage takes the attack and vanishes; Tail: the Defender takes the damage and the mirage remains. Lasts until the end of this Turn.

If you wish for further explanations for these cards, or if some conflict results from their use, you can e-mail your queries to: [mordred@coffehaus.com](mailto:mordred@coffehaus.com), or [dp9@coffehaus.com](mailto:dp9@coffehaus.com). If you do not have internet access, then simply mail it to our address.





## FORTUNE



### TERRAIN ADVANTAGE

MOVEMENT COST  
DIVIDED BY TWO

277

## FORTUNE



### HONORABLE FIGHT

FOREGO COMBOS;  
MOVES BECOME  
-1 AC/+1 OVERLOAD

278

## FORTUNE



### GLANCE

LOOK AT OPPONENT'S  
UNTURNT  
EQUIPMENT CARDS

281

## FORTUNE



### FRIENDLY ADVICE

LOOK AT HALF OF  
YOUR OPPONENT'S  
CURRENT HAND

282

## FORTUNE



### FUMBLE

CANCEL SECOND  
MOVE OF A PATTERN

285

## FORTUNE



### UNEXPECTED COVER

ALL YOUR DEFENSE  
CARDS BECOME  
DEFENSE: ALL

286



## FORTUNE



### FORWARD OBSERVER

SELECT LOCATION (H,T,L)  
ON YOUR OPPONENT,  
FOR ANY MOVE

279

## FORTUNE



### JURY RIG

KEEP DESTROYED  
EQUIPMENT UNTIL  
END OF NEXT TURN

280

## FORTUNE



### EXPERIMENTAL DRUGS

REMOVE HALF OF  
OVERLOAD TAKEN

283

## FORTUNE



### SHORTCUT

MOVE ANYWHERE  
FOR 1 ACTION

284

## FORTUNE



### SCROUNGED AMMO

+2 USES TO  
ANY MOVE WITH  
LIMITED USES

287

## FORTUNE



### MIRAGE

FLIP A COIN:  
H: MIRAGE IS HIT  
AND VANISHES;  
T: MIRAGE REMAINS

288

**HEAVY  
GEAR**



**FIGHTER**

SHOWDOWN IN THE BADLANDS

**HEAVY  
GEAR**



**FIGHTER**

SHOWDOWN IN THE BADLANDS

**HEAVY  
GEAR**



**FIGHTER**

**HEAVY  
GEAR**



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**HEAVY  
GEAR**



**FIGHTER**

SHOWDOWN IN THE BADLANDS

**HEAVY  
GEAR**



**FIGHTER**



## IMPROVED FIGHTING

by Jean Carrières

As the game stands, *Heavy Gear Fighter* is a game that is slightly biased toward heavier Gears. Because they have more armor than their lighter brethren, the Grizzly and the Spitting Cobra reign supreme on the battlefield. Also, the Gear character cards offer only 10 Moves per machine, a limitation that sometimes forces a pilot to perform a Move he would rather not use.

This article features optional rules that allow you more flexibility and better fighting skills when using a lighter Gear. Because it requires the expenditure of extra Actions to effectively buy Specs for a Move, it becomes less advantageous for heavier models and balances the game in favor of lighter machines such as the Cheetah or the Iguaña.

The concept behind this optional rule is to buy a Spec that is not present in a Move. Only ONE Spec may be bought for any Move, although it may be bought more than once in cases where this apply (such as *Boost Move to*, for instance). The Spec is bought for ONE use of the Move only. It does NOT last the whole Turn.

The following table outlines the Action Cost modifiers that apply to the Moves depending on their color. Consult the descriptions that follow to get a more detailed explanation.

### Boost Move to...

A Move that is Green or Yellow can be improved to become a Move of a higher Color (Yellow, Red) by spending more Actions. Every time a Move is boosted, its damage is doubled. For instance, a Green Move that does 40 points of damage can, for +3 Actions, become a Yellow Move that will do 80 points of damage. For another +3 Actions, it can become a Red Move that will do 160 points of Damage.

### Combo to...

Regardless of the Color of the Move you are performing, it is the Color of the Move you are Combo'ing TO that determines the cost you must pay. For example, performing a Combo to Green, regardless of the initial Move's Color, costs +1 Action.

### Dodge

This Spec costs +2 Actions no matter what. Any card of the appropriate Color (or better) can be played, at +2 to its listed Action Cost.

### Fire & Forget

This Spec costs +1 Actions regardless of the Move's Color. Usable only with A or • moves.

### High/Torso/Low

This Spec cancels any previous location Spec on the Move (if any) and replaces it with the new selection. This costs +1 Action regardless of the Move's Color.

### Keep Away

This Spec costs +1 Action regardless of the Move's Color.

### Piercing

This Spec is rather powerful and may not be bought more than once for any Move. If the Piercing Spec is already present in the Move, it cannot be bought at all.

### Ranged

This Spec costs +1 Action regardless of the Move's Color. Usable only with U or \* moves.

### Reduced Damage

It is possible to reduce the Action Cost of a Move by lowering its damage. It can only be lowered once for a Green Move (-1 AC, -10 damage), twice for a Yellow Move (-2 AC, -20 damage) and three times for a Red Move (-3 AC, -30 damage).

### Reduced Overload

It is possible to reduce the Action Cost of a Move by lowering its Overload. It can only be lowered once for a Green Move (-1 AC, -1 Overload), twice for a Yellow Move (-2 AC, -2 Overload) and three times for a Red Move (-3 AC, -3 Overload).

### Remote Fire

This Spec costs +2 Action regardless of the Move's Color. Usable only with A or • moves.

### Use other Card

Buying this Spec for a given Color allows the player to use any other type of card from this Color to perform this Move. For instance, a Yellow Move that requires an Armed (A) or an Ammo (•) card can, at the cost of +2 Actions, be played using a Power (\*) card.

### X-Ranged

This Spec costs +1 Action regardless of the Move's Color. Usable only with U or \* moves.

### SPEC ACTION COSTS SUMMARY

Spec Bought	Green	Yellow	Red
Boost Move to...	N/A	+3 for every Color boost	
Combo to...	+1 AC	+2 AC	+3 AC
Dodge	+2 AC	+2 AC	+2 AC
Fire & Forget	+1 AC	+1 AC	+1 AC
High/Torso/Low	+1 AC	+1 AC	+1 AC
Keep Away	+1 AC	+1 AC	+1 AC
Piercing	+1 AC	+2 AC	+3 AC
Ranged	+1 AC	+1 AC	+1 AC
Reduced Damage	-1 AC for every -10 points of damage		
Reduced Overload	-1 AC for every -1 Overload		
Remote Fire	+2 AC	+2 AC	+2 AC
Use other Card	+2 AC	+2 AC	+2 AC
X-Ranged	+1 AC	+1 AC	+1 AC

## Episode 23: Complications

Contrary to what Chirico first believed, Fyana is alive and ran away from the wreck in the hope of finding him. Meanwhile, Ypsilon looks for Chirico's A.T., which has sunk to the bottom. By the time he finds it, he realizes that Chirico is no longer in it... Just in time to hear Chirico blow the air tank on the blue A.T. with his hand gun, Ypsilon is forced to surface. Ypsilon has failed to eliminate his enemy once more and he is furious.

At the palace, Boro gets a blast from Kansielman who is quite dissatisfied with the Perfect Soldiers' record. Boro tries to explain, but the king dismisses him and orders Proto-One to be shot on sight. The battle at the river is now finished. As Chirico repairs his salvaged A.T., he explains his plan to the others. Their first objective was to bring back the Perfect Soldier and they will do so. Kuan Yu protests, but has no other choice than go with them.

Fyana, exhausted from her long run, sleeps on a rocky ledge. Her rest is interrupted by Ypsilon, who tries to take her back. She wants nothing to do with him or Boro anymore and pulls a gun on him to prove her point. Although she cannot kill him, she will gladly end her own life if he persists. He backs off but his men open fire on Fyana. As Ypsilon tries to defend her, it becomes evident that his programming does not allow him to fire at his own allies. As Chirico nears the mountain range, he sees explosions in the distance and is positive that Fyana is there.

On the hill side, Fyana tries to escape while Ypsilon protects her, but his A.T. is heavily damaged and he is trapped in the wreckage. Fortunately for Fyana, Chirico and his companions arrive and save both of them. The young Perfect Soldier is furious at owing his life to Chirico, but he has no choice. As Chirico frees Ypsilon from the wreck, Kidera alerts him that both Kuan Yu and Fyana have disappeared. Yu has pursued and captured her, intent on bringing her back to EX-10 himself to clear his reputation.

Kuan Yu has stopped to rest and inform the base of the capture. He does not notice that Chirico has found him. After a short fight, Chirico gets rid of Yu by dumping him in the river. Swept down by the current, the platoon leader swears revenge against Chirico and Fyana. Alone at last, Chirico and Fyana spend a day together and he discovers that she is everything he thought she was. The glimpses of what the future with her might be causes Chirico to decide to end the present mess if he wants that future to become reality. Fyana is fearful but resigns herself.

## Episode 24: The Crossing

As Chirico and Fyana start their long walk toward the Kummen palace, they are surprised by a group of Bera

*Standing Turtles* who attack them with missiles. Although Chirico is an expert in A.T. combat, he is overwhelmed by the vast number of enemies. Luckily, Polaria, Kidera and Shako arrive to save them, blowing the Bera's A.T. apart.

After the battle, Chirico's comrades are uneasy about the presence of Fyana among them. Chirico explains Rid and the Merukian Perfect Soldier project, which relaxes them a bit. Polaria is a little worried about tackling the Kummen army but decides to follow nonetheless. At the holy palace, King Kansielman discusses strategy with his officers. They opt for the "scorched earth" tactic, especially in the areas where the Merukians will be landing. In his quarters, Ypsilon takes a Jijirium shower while Boro explains the situation.

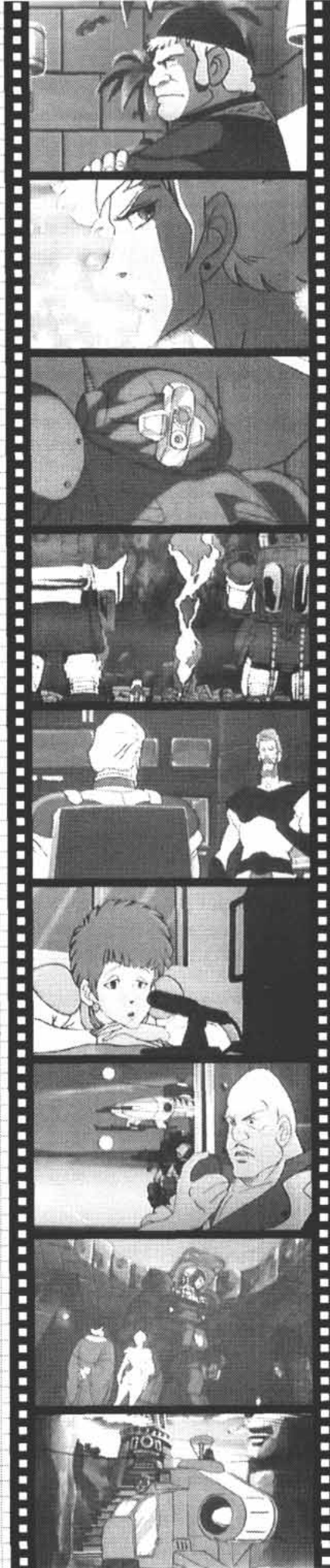
As Chirico lays out the plan of attack, Lou Shako surprises the group by declaring that he will not go with them. He does not want to breach his mercenary contract. The others are sad about leaving him behind but have no choice. As they get underway, an EX-10 chopper appears and orders them to go back to base with the captured Perfect Soldier. Kidera opens fire and chases the chopper away. Back at EX-10, Gon Ner receives news of the desertion. He contacts Jan-Paul Rochina, who tells him to just monitor Chirico and company and prepare for a large scale Merukian assault.

At Gotho's place, Vanilla receives the orders for his next mission. Although Coconna is concerned about Chirico, he has the impression that she is also concerned for him, and that makes Vanilla quite happy.

As they make their way to Kummen palace via the river, Chirico's group is attacked by a group of Bera A.T. Although the Bera outnumber them, Fyana can sense where each machine is going to emerge and directs the team's fire against that spot, making the fight quite short. After the battle, Kidera remarks that bringing Fyana was a good idea. At the palace, Ypsilon and Boro have a strategy meeting with Albert Kiri, who informs Ypsilon that he will send a brand new A.T. prototype which will help him considerably.

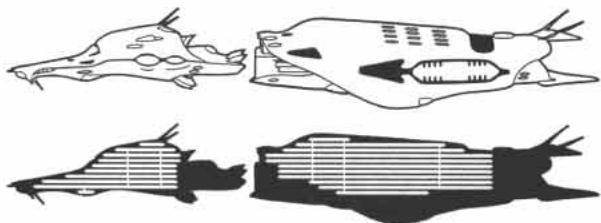
The first objective of Chirico's group is the Bera armory. As they prepare to attack, Fyana decides to go in, steal an A.T. and attack the base from inside while the others strike from outside. As she moves silently through the hangar, she hears somebody talk about the mass mobilisation of Kummen troops. She steals one of the *Standing Turtles* and starts to destroy everything in sight. When Chirico reaches her, the base is in total chaos and completely unusable. Now, on to the palace!

to be continued.





## • SIDE VIEW/CUTAWAY



## Macross II<sup>™</sup> Spaceships & Deck Plans — Volume One

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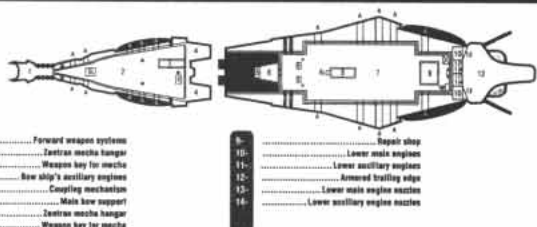
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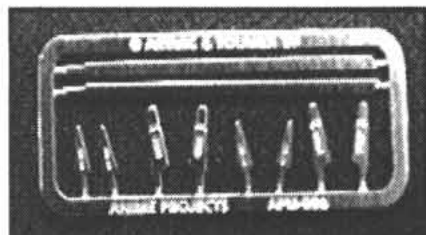
## HEAVY ARMOR

By the Dream Pod 9 Modeling Team

HEAVY ARMOR is a regular feature that takes a look at some of the miniatures available on the market for mechanized science-fiction gamers and modelers.

The reviews are mostly centered on the molding and general appearance of the miniature as it comes out of its package. Whenever possible, accuracy is checked against the gaming illustration which served as a template. Other review criteria include molding quality, detail and so forth.

This issue's HEAVY ARMOR focuses on the just-released *Bubblegum Crisis* miniatures by Anime Projects, Ltd.



This is what the delicate photoetched detail sheet looks like when you open the box. It is a very thin brass plate which is etched by a strong acid to form perfect, incredibly fine parts. Care must be taken when cutting them free to avoid losing the pieces.

From left to right, top to bottom: Linna's laser blades (2), Priss' head antennae (2), Nene's antennae (2) and spare antennae for both girls.

Anime Projects Ltd. markets their anime miniatures under the brand name Animail. Their products are distributed in North America by AnimEigo. They can also be reached directly at Anime Projects Ltd., 19 High Street, Bangor, Gwynedd, LL57 1NP, England.

Name: Knight Sabers in Hardsuits (4)  
Manufacturer: Anime Projects, Ltd.

Kit Number: APM-006  
Material: pewter



Good miniatures of the famous Knight Sabers were long awaited by both the gamers and the anime enthusiasts, and they were well worth the wait. This kit contains all four iron maidens in a sturdy transparent blister pack which can be used and reused for part storage.

There are six pewter pieces — four hardsuits and two backpacks — plus one photoetched brass antenna sprue, along with a photocopied painting guide. The painting guide lists the correct colors in the Humbrol acrylic line, but since this paint is not available here we could not judge of the accuracy of the suggestions. The antennae and laser ribbons are provided for Nene, Priss and Linna's hardsuits, respectively. Photoetched brass is a technique which yields incredibly fine parts, and this one is no exception (see picture). The pewter parts are flash-free and were rapidly cleaned up.

Preparing the antennae proved tricky, if only because of their small size. Tweezers are a must, and care must be exercised in cutting them free lest the parts become dangerous shrapnel — the use of safety glasses is highly recommended for this operation. The antennae

rest in small depressions along the side of the head of the hardsuits. Linna's laser ribbons were carefully bended before assembly to add dynamism to the miniature.

After a flat white primer coat, all four miniatures were painted with acrylics using the animation as a reference. Art books were also used, but since these are hard to come by, the best bet for most modelers is still the OVA series itself.

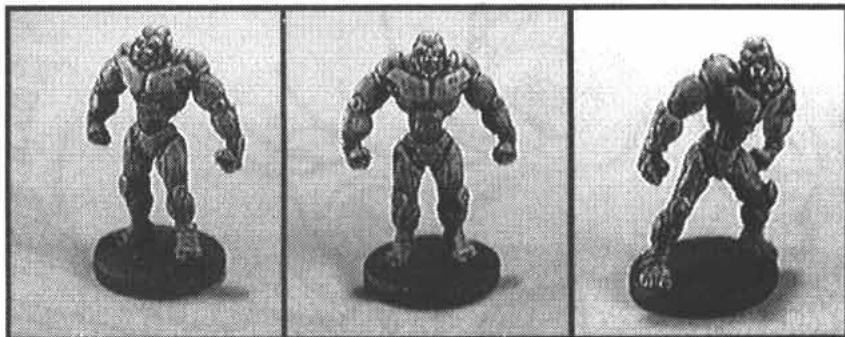
The basic color was first applied and shaded. The backpacks and antennae were painted separately so as not to damage them. The trim was applied next with a fine detail brush. This tricky job was greatly helped by fine, engraved guidelines at the proper positions on the miniatures themselves. The metallic portions of the suits were painted with shades of grey to simulate a metallic effect. Once this was done, careful key-lining was made with black and other dark shades of the main colors.

The bases were painted black, then drybrushed with dark grey to simulate concrete. The antennae and backpacks were glued with cyanocrylate super glue. The final touch was an overall spray of Mat varnish to seal and protect the finish.



**Name:** Combat Boomers (3)  
**Manufacturer:** Anime Projects, Ltd.

**Kir Number:** APM-007  
**Material:** pewter



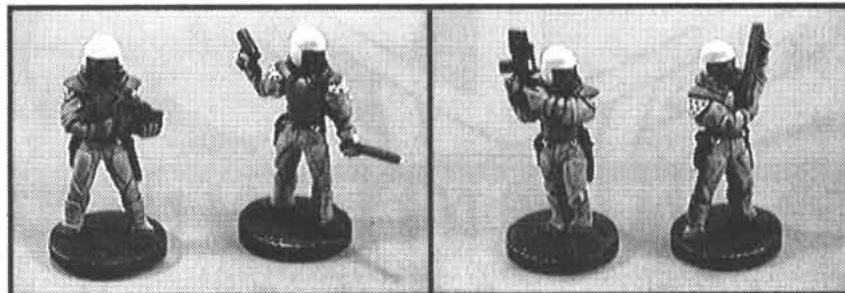
This kit contains three BU-55C combat boomers. Two of the miniatures are the same, but they can be slightly modified by bending their limbs so that they assume different postures. All three are molded with their back-mounted thrusters closed.

The molding is crisp, with a single mold line running along the side of each miniature. It was easily removed by scraping it with a blade, then polishing off with fine sandpaper. Each miniature is molded in one piece with its base. The base was a little more difficult to clean because the legs of the boomer kept getting in the way.

- BU-55C are generally metallic blue in color, but at this scale it is best to simulate the metallic effect with shades of blue and grey. All three boomers were painted overall black after priming, then drybrushed with three shades of blue. A blue-grey wash was then applied, followed by the key-lining of every major body joint in black. Some subtle grey drybrushing was used to highlight the detail of the various articulations. The eyes were painted bright red and the teeth, faded white with pure white highlights. The final touch was a couple of red additional "sensor strips" on the body.

**Name:** AD Police troopers (4)  
**Manufacturer:** Anime Projects, Ltd.

**Kir Number:** APM-008  
**Material:** pewter

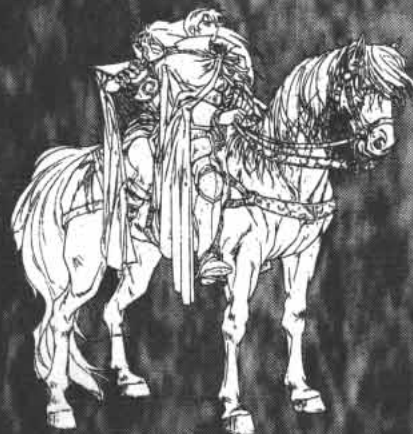


The last package in the series contains four policemen in full anti-boomer gear. All four have different postures and equipment, and the design from the animation is faithfully reproduced. These trooper miniatures could also be used in any dark future setting without any problem.

Each miniature is molded in one solid piece with its base. The troopers were flash-free, with a thin mold line running along the side of the bodies and the helmets. The mold line was easily removed with sandpaper, although some care was needed to avoid destroying detail on the lower body of the miniatures, especially the belt's equipment fasteners.

- The overall detail is extremely good and crisp. The clothes have natural folds, while the guns actually look like what they are supposed to look like. The face mask, with its goggles and gas filter, is especially well-done.
- The miniatures were first primed and then painted in the standard ADP uniform: pale blue-grey coverall, medium police blue armor jacket, pale leather boots and gloves and brown equipment belts. The armor plates were painted various shades of grey to simulate metals, while the guns were black with a dark grey drybrush. The final step was to paint the goggles bright red and highlight them with a touch of orange.

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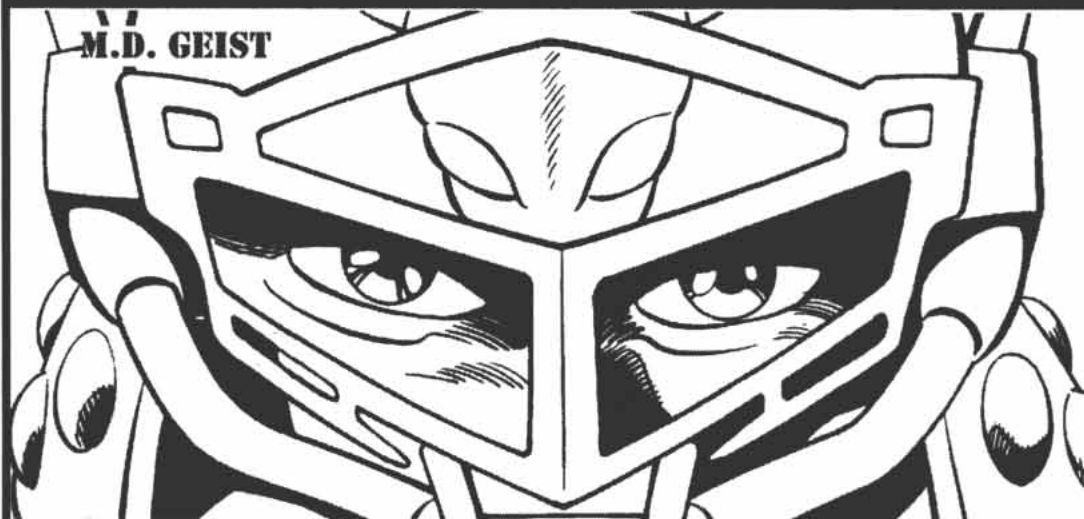
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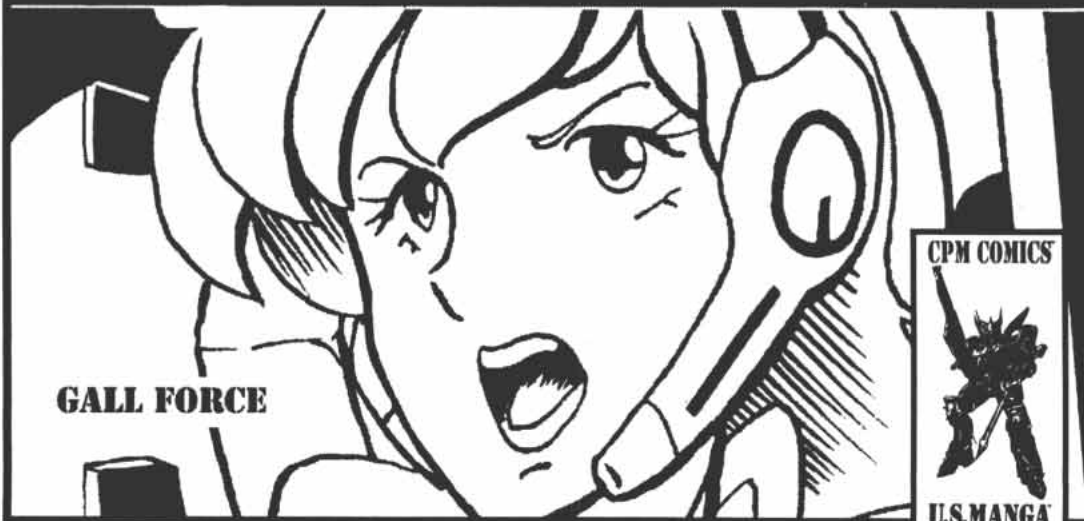
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## BATTLETECH NOVELS

By Marc A. Vezina

### BRED FOR WAR

by Michael Stackpole

Publisher: ROC SF, a division of Penguin Books Ltd.

ISBN Number: 0-451-45441-3

As usual, Michael Stackpole's latest novel introduces major changes in the political and social map of the Battletech universe. Spanning the latter half of the year 3057, *Bred For War* covers several subplots and witnesses the deaths of some major Battletech characters (no, we're not telling which ones).

Stackpole is here equal to himself, producing a fast-paced novel that constantly varies the reader's point of view. Unfortunately, the first half of the book looks more like a grandiose soap opera than it does a war epic. One can almost see the mind's eye's camera closing in on the face of the major protagonist as each chapter draws to a close, while dramatic music reaches a crescendo.

Only at mid-novel does the real action pick up. There, the Stackpole of old returns with tales of war and betrayal, espionage and high-level intrigue. The consequences and revelations of the last few chapters will set the flavor of the game background for the year to come — or at least until the next novel.

All in all, an important book to pick up if you are interested in the continuity of the Battletech universe. But do yourself a favor, start at mid-book.

### CLOSE QUARTERS

by Victor Milán

Publisher: ROC SF, a division of Penguin Books Ltd.

ISBN Number: 0-451-45429-4

*Close Quarters* sets a different pace from most Battletech books in that the main heroine, Cassie Surton, is not a Mechwarrior but a scout, one of the resourceful spy-types so crucial, yet so overlooked by most gamers. Not only is she a scout, but she hates Battlemechs with a passion.

This book is somewhat outside the main Battletech story arc. The story takes place on Hochiman, a rich planet in the heart of the Draconis Combine: the heroine's unit, Camacho's Caballeros, just signed up for garrison duty with the local Kurita lord. Things become tangled up (and dangerous) when friction and conflicts are revealed between their employers and a surprising Yakuza/ISF alliance. The resulting conflict will force a coming-of-age for scout Cassie.

Milán has a good grip of the Battletech universe, giving us varied characters and a well-described environment. His Battlemech descriptions are especially vivid, and the fights are nicely choreographed. However, the characters attract most of the reader's attention. They are well-defined, and although they sometimes fall into cliché, they are nevertheless believable. The Caballeros are a rough bunch, and they may not be as powerful or glamorous as the Kell Hounds or the Grey Death Legion, but they will grow on you.

*Close Quarters* is a good Battletech novel, and is most definitely useful inspiration for gamemasters looking for background and plot ideas for out-of-the-battlefield adventures.



## THE BASICS OF MECHA MODELING

By the DP9 Modeling Team

*The Basics of Mecha Modeling* is an ongoing series about, what else, mecha modeling. It is primarily intended for beginner-level modelers, but it is the authors' hope that even long-time plastic bashers will find something useful in these pages.

The series is a direct result of the queries many of the readers addressed to us since the magazine began. Many wanted to get into mecha modeling, but had no idea on how to do it. The Pod team thus sat down and laid down on paper the observations of years of modeling experience. We sincerely hope it will help make the pursuit of this hobby easier for many readers.



### PART 4

#### PRE-ASSEMBLY PREPARATION

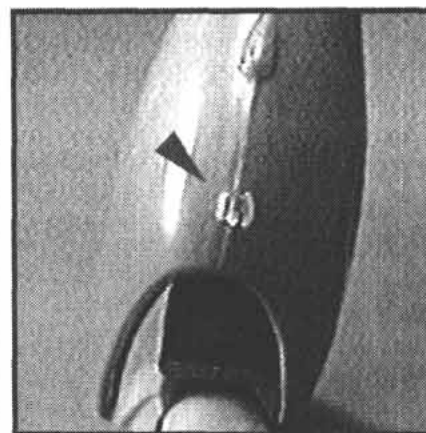
Now you have a kit to build and tools to build it with. You are probably anxious to start shaping your new creation right away, but modeling is one of these hobbies where rushing in is not a good thing.

Most modern kits are placed in sealed plastic bags within their boxes. Don't go ripping the bags open like a ravenous beast hungry for plastic. Sometimes, parts get loose from the sprues during shipping and handling, and you don't want them flying off into the wild blue yonder. Take the sprues and place them in an orderly fashion on your work surface. Usually, the instructions contain either a picture or a drawing of the sprues; use it to check if all parts are present and accounted for. This is especially important when dealing with garage kits.

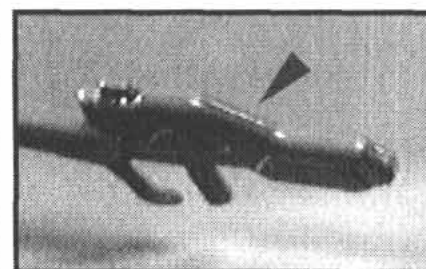
At the same time, check if any part has been damaged, and take note of it. Damage usually takes the form of chipping and/or warping, both of which can be fixed with little trouble. Unless the damage is severe or an important part is missing (in which case you should contact your retailer), you are ready to begin the assembly proper.

The first step of assembly is planning. Track down any reference you can about the mecha you are currently building. Unlike airplane or car models, the function of the parts in a mecha kit is sometimes not quite clear... Any drawing or schema that shows the model will be helpful. Do not follow the instruction sheet blindly. Establish your own building procedure if the method proposed in the manual makes the assembly more difficult. Sometimes, you can save yourself a lot of work by simply being logical.

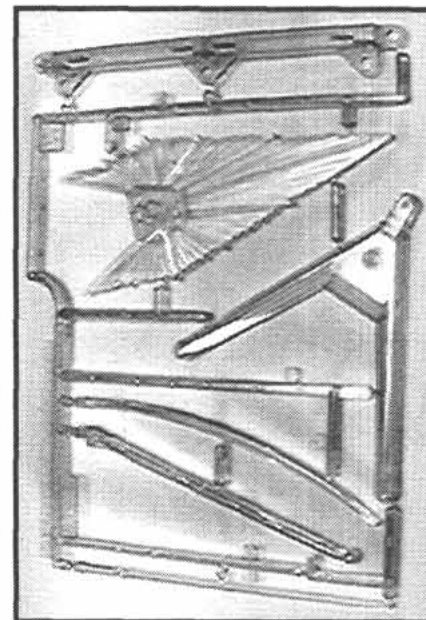
Once you have decided upon the assembly procedure, you can gently wash the sprues with lukewarm water and gentle soap to remove the last of the mold release agent. Let the sprues dry on their own — no need to break out the hairdryer! Unless the parts are especially



This 1/144 scale *Abigor* leg shows what happens when parts are removed from the sprue by twisting.



Although it's hard to see on this picture, there's a mold line running the length of the gun (see arrow). Remove such mold line by gently scraping with a blade, then polish with sandpaper.



Plastic parts come on a sprue and must be cut out prior to assembly. Clear plastic sprue, such as this one, are more brittle and require additional care when cutting the parts free.

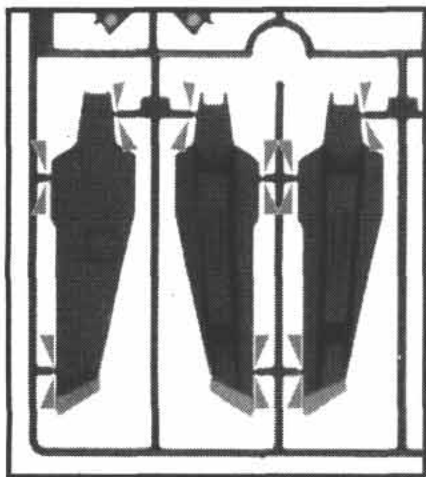


greasy, this step is optional and can be omitted without any problem.

You can now start cutting out the parts. There are two schools of thought here: some modelers prefer to cut out the parts as they need it so they won't lose a piece, while others cut them all out at once. The DP9 team is of the latter, as we generally "dryfit" (assemble without glue) the model first to check on the fit and general proportions. Use the method you feel most comfortable with.

*Do not twist the parts off the sprues! It is the best way to damage them. Use a pair of small scissors or cutters and don't cut too close to the pieces — you can always come back with a hobby knife or a file later. You can also use the hobby knife directly, but be careful not to apply too much pressure. Several unpleasant things could then occur: the blade could slip and cut you, or the sprues might buckle under the stress. Once the part is free, remove any flash or mold line by gently scraping it off with the knife or a file, then lightly sand until you are satisfied with the component. Repeat for each new part, paying special attention to small detail pieces: too much pressure and psst! Up in the air (sometimes literally)!*

Before we can go on building, we need to examine the stuff that will hold the model together: the glue.



This diagram shows where to correctly cut a part's mounting pin. Better to leave too much sprue on the piece than not enough — it can always be removed later.

## PART 5

## GLUES

Glues are vital to the modeler. Unless you build only the snap-together mecha model, you will have to use glue eventually. Several types of glue are commonly available, but not all of them are suitable for modeling.

### Polystyrene Glue

This is the glue that most people associate with modeling. It does not actually glue the plastic, but melts it slightly, "welding" the parts together. It exists in two forms, tube and liquid. They share the same basic chemistry: acetone and toluene, both of which are dangerous if inhaled. Always work in a well-ventilated place when using polystyrene glue.

Tube glue is stabilized by the addition of a polymer, making it thicker — somewhat like syrup — and easier to work with. It is cheap and easily available. Tube glue has the advantage of drying slowly, letting the modeler adjust a part until the fit is correct. It is also a useful characteristic when gluing extremely large pieces, whereas liquid glue sometimes dries at one end before the entire bonding surface can be coated!

For best results, tube glue must be applied with a fine toothpick. The flow from the tube itself is next to impossible to control and causes the messes which are often seen on beginners' models. It is much better to put a small blob of glue on a small card and use the toothpick to transfer just the right quantity to the model's surface. Don't try to use tube glue as filler putty; it won't work and will probably damage the model.

The presence of the polymer thickening agent can cause thin filaments to form when handling the glue. They can ruin a model's surface if they come into contact with it. Remember, this type of glue melts the plastic! If such a thing happens, put the model aside and wait until the glue dries. Then, gently sand off the filament. The damage should be minimal if you keep calm and don't touch the affected area.

Liquid glue is harder to use, but it provides better results overall. It must be applied with a paintbrush. Generally, one is provided in the lid of the glue jar, but it's often large and somewhat coarse. It is better to get a natural hair "4" paintbrush and use it as a dedicated "glue brush". Don't use this paintbrush for painting, only for applying glue, unless you like purchasing new paint jars to replace the contaminated ones...

Liquid glue is extremely volatile and also burns well. Make sure you use it in a well-ventilated area, close the lid of the jar when you are not using it (this will also reduce evaporation, extending the glue's shelf life) and keep open flame and heat away from it. Try to avoid contact with your skin. It is better for your health and you won't risk getting melted fingerprints all over the model.

Liquid glue can and does run, and it dries very quickly. You can use this to good effect by holding two parts very close to one another and letting the glue flow by capillarity between them. If some glue accidentally spills on the model, don't touch it! Let it dry, then sand the blemish, just like tube glue filaments.

Polystyrene glue is manufactured by several companies, but the most widely available (by far) is Testor's. Other brands include Humbrol, LePage, and Tamiya.

### Cyanacrylate Glue

If your model is a garage kit, you will need cyanacrylate (CA) glue to assemble it. CA glue is also known as superglue. It bonds just about anything very strongly (including flesh), but the bonds formed are weak unless the mating surfaces are clean and fit well. Some types of CA glues are especially formulated to overcome this and can even fill small gaps. Ask your local retailer for help.

Like polystyrene tube glue, CA glue is best applied with a small toothpick. The better the fit between the parts to be joined, the stronger the bond. Water will prevent the chemical reaction from happening, so the surfaces to be joined must be absolutely dry.

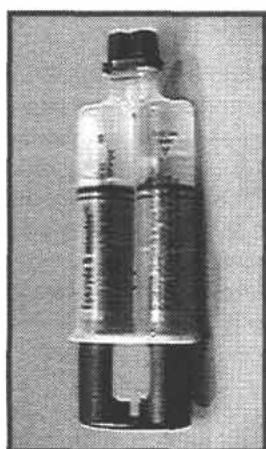
# MECHA MODELS

Be *extremely* careful when working with CA glue. It will glue anything that come into contact with it, and this include skin (fingers, mouth, eyelids — no jokes. Seen it before). If you get some on your hands, *don't* touch anything! Quickly use acetone or running water to wash it off. Cyanocrylate, as its name indicates, also contains some minute quantity of cyanide, which is a very toxic compound. So use it in a well-ventilated area and don't breathe the fumes. Mostly, *don't* ever, ever heat it to make it cure faster. This will generate very toxic fumes that are extremely harmful (trust us, we learned this by personal experience). Use accelerator sprays instead for faster curing (just ask your retailer).

The best brands are Zap-A-Gap and Atomic, both of which were specifically designed for modelers. Several grades are available according to the use they are intended for: medium grade is usually best for modeling, but getting a bottle of gap-filler grade won't hurt either.

## Epoxy Glue

The term "epoxy glue" covers a wide variety of adhesive resins that are cured by a chemical reaction instead of evaporation. Most epoxies come as two-part set that must be mixed in equal proportions, yielding a strong and nearly universal glue. Epoxy glues work best for bad-



Epoxy glues often come in syringes like this one. Avoid them if possible — although the basic idea is good, the different densities of the two components make it a pain to get equal amount of each without making a mess. Tube epoxy is easier to work with.

fitting, high stress applications, but they have a slow curing time and are somewhat expensive. The best type to use is the everyday tube epoxy found at the local hobby or hardware store.

Make sure your model is ready to receive the glue. Using a toothpick, carefully pick up equal quantities of resin from both tubes. Don't use the same toothpick for both tubes, or you will find yourself with a solidly epoxied cap next time you try to use the tube! By the same token, be careful to put the right cap back on the right tube. Use a scrap sheet of cardboard as a mixing palette. Epoxy starts to harden as soon as it is mixed so you have only about two to three minutes to apply it and put the parts together. Take your time anyway — two minutes is a lot longer than you think. The pieces must then remain exactly as they are while the glue cures. The epoxy will be hard in about an hour, and completely cured in about 24 hours.

If possible, try not to get uncured epoxy on your skin. As usual, work in a well-ventilated area and keep away from open flame. Several brands of epoxies exist, and it would be futile to try and list them all.

## White Glue

Also referred to as wood glue or paper glue, this is the stuff you used in kindergarten. It can generally be thinned with water and is designed to hold together porous material with low stress applications. Since mecha models are hardly porous (unless you build *really* strange models) and require strong bonds, this type of glue is practically useless for our purposes. Some modelers use it to glue transparent canopies (low stress application, and hardened glue does not show) or to reinforce decals.

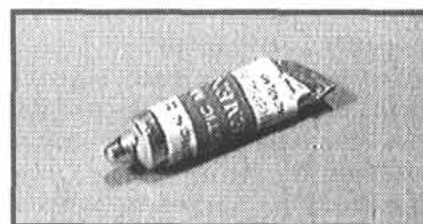
## Contact Glue

Contact glue is used by carpenters for high stress applications. It is a toxic product that is much too strong for modeling applications, and as such it should be completely avoided.

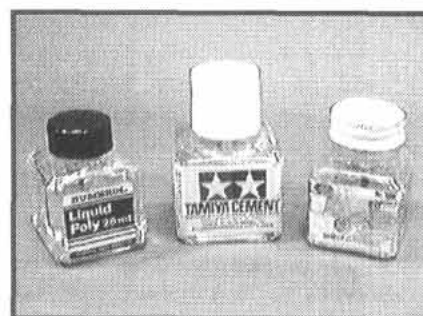
Next installment, we will continue to discuss the assembly process.



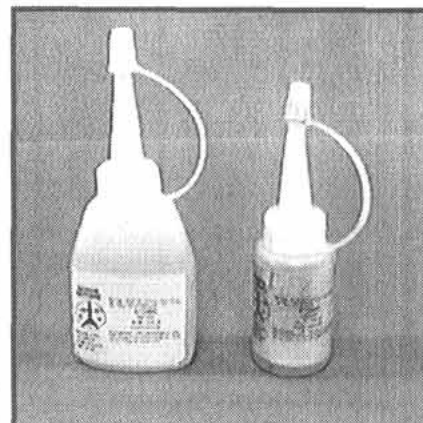
This is a typical example of polystyrene tube glue. Don't use the glue directly from the tubes, though. Use a toothpick instead to transfer just the right amount to your parts.



Many Asian kits come with small tubes of glue. Don't use them — the glue is more often than not of very poor quality.

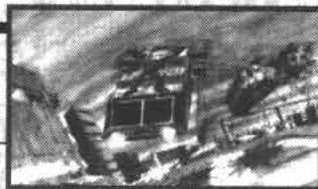
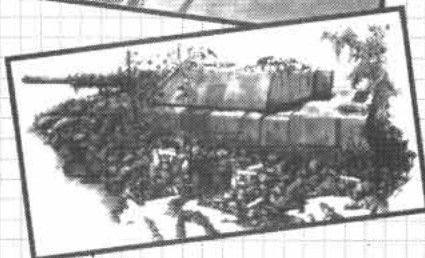
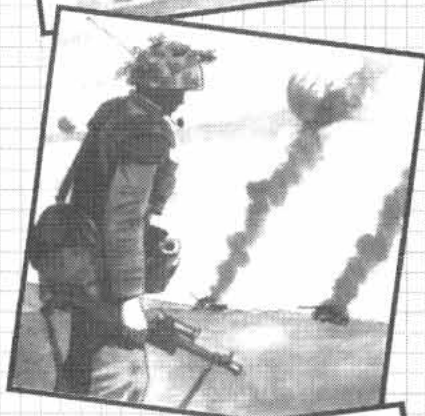
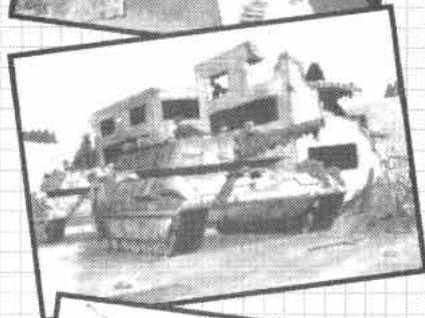
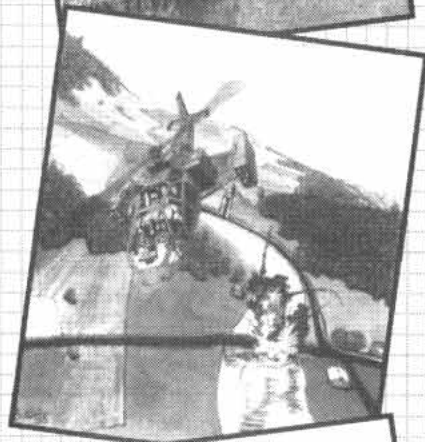
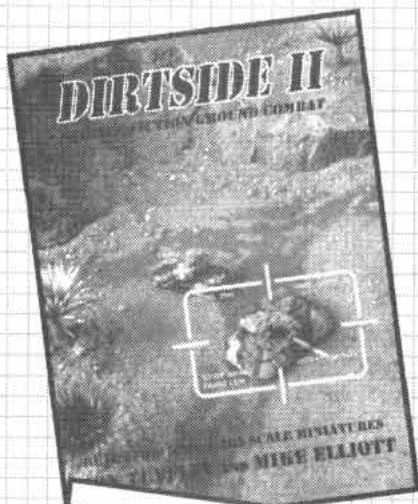


This is a selection of good liquid polystyrene glues. From left to right: Humbrol, Tamiya and Testor.



CA glues are very powerful but can be dangerous (see text).





## DIRTSIDE II

By Marc A. Vezina

by Jon Tuffley and Mike Elliott

Publisher: Ground Zero Games

ISBN Number: 0-9521936-0-4

*Dirtsides II* is the second edition of a science-fiction miniature-based wargame published by Ground Zero Games of England. It is a generic set of rules that allow simulation of mechanized battles from many science-fiction universes. All types of vehicles, from tanks to grav-ranks to mecha are covered, up to support fighters and down to infantry in powered armors.

The cover of the book is a picture of two grav-rank miniatures with targeting reticules superimposed on them, with the *Dirtsides II* logo above. The rules are not that dense: the book is merely 56 pages long, shrinkwrapped with two sheets of pre-punched damage chits and counters.

*Dirtsides II* is a pure wargame, using models and a miniature terrain. The rules are clear and well-presented in a friendly, "let-me-explain" manner. The rules are also fairly innovative, using small chits and different types of dice (d4 to d10) in an effort to minimize chart references and book-keeping.

The book opens with a short introduction explaining the genesis of the game and how it is intended to be used. The game's proposed background is relegated to the appendix so as not to intrude on the "generic" nature of the game engine (a sensible precaution, in this reviewer's opinion).

The basic concepts of the game and its assumptions about technology are then examined, closely followed by the vehicle design system. This system is clear, simple, and easy to use. Although it greatly simplifies the characteristics of each vehicle, it does allow one to generate statistics for almost any science-fiction miniature, regardless of its type.

The next few chapters cover the bulk of the rules, from morale to movement to fire combat. Entire chapters are devoted to specialized units and their use, such as infantry, artillery batteries and aerospace units (the latter chapter also offers rules for space-to-ground landings and combat drops). Chapter 11 provides some optional rules for minefields, nukes, biochem warfare and many other special cases.

The last segment of the book links the background of the other award-winning Ground Zero Games' *Full Thrust* into the *Dirtsides II* rules. Two complete scenarios can be found along with ideas for further games and even complete campaigns.

The game does have some flaws and shortcomings, but is otherwise a solid miniature-based wargame which can effortlessly represent most science-fiction battles. For the gamer who is not afraid of breaking out the miniatures and is looking for a well-detailed set of rules, *Dirtsides II* is highly recommended.

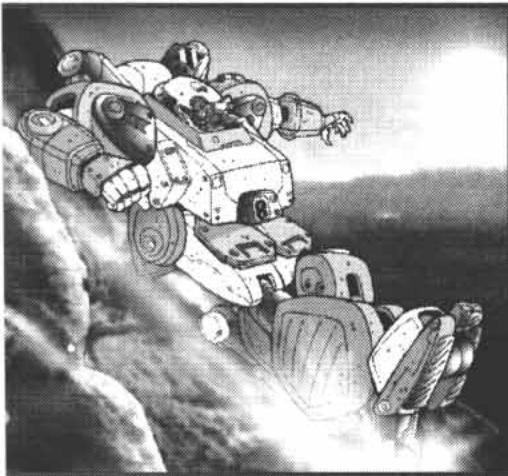
*Dirtsides II* is distributed in Canada and the United States by GEO-HEX. Suggested retail price is \$20.00 US for the main rulebook and \$6.00 US for extra counter sheets. GEO-HEX also distribute the models.

## HEAVY GEAR: DUELING SCALE

By Gene Marcil

The following Dueling Scale Rules are an alternate rules set for the Heavy Gear tactical combat system. These rules are *not* a complete rules set. They are changes to the tactical combat rules detailed in the Heavy Gear rulebook.

The Dueling Scale Rules are intended to simulate play-by-play arena combat between small numbers of Heavy Gears (preferably six or less). It can also be used to simulate urban combat with greater accuracy.



### Change of Scale

Dueling scale hexes are 10m across (one-fifth the size of the usual hexes). Dueling scale combat rounds represent 6 seconds of real time. Vehicle MP scores do not change. One MP still represents approximately 6 kph of speed.

### Stacking

No more than 10 Size points may be present in a single dueling scale hex at one time. If a vehicle attempts to enter a hex that is already occupied by 10 Size points, it is automatically assumed to be ramming one of the occupying units (ramming player's choice of target).

If the rammed unit is a vehicle and sustains enough damage point to cause Light Damage or more, move it one hex directly away from the direction the ramming attack came from.

If the rammed unit is a vehicle and does not sustain at least Light Damage, end the ramming vehicle's movement one hex before it entered the disputed hex.

If the rammed unit was an infantry squad, move it one hex (in any direction) away from the disputed hex.

### Initiative

This alternate rules set assumes that vehicle crews are independent, as opposed to being part of a coordinated military unit. Therefore, instead of rolling initiative for each combat group, players should roll initiative for each individual vehicle separately. Dueling scale initiative rolls are Piloting skill rolls, NOT Leadership skill rolls.

### Movement

Vehicles move in the same manner as in a normal tactical game with one exception: vehicles move individually, not as part of a combat group.

### Actions

In dueling combat, players still get the same number of actions per round as in tactical combat. However, the scope of what an action includes has been reduced. For example, in the tactical system, maneuvering a vehicle costs zero actions and firing a weapon costs one action. In the dueling system, maneuvering a vehicle requires one action and both aiming and firing a weapon require an action each.

As a general rule, most complete acts in the dueling system require two actions. The first action represents preparing to perform the action (e.g. aiming a weapon or activating sensors). The second action represents the actual completion of the act (e.g. firing the weapon at a target or performing the sensor scan). Usually, the second action can be performed many times in a row without requiring the first act to be repeated. For example, once a vehicle has acquired a

target, it can fire upon it repeatedly until it loses sight of the target or switches to another target.

The following are common actions in dueling combat:

#### Maneuvering

In addition to costing 1 MP, any turn of 2 hex-facings or more (120°+) requires one action.

#### Shifting into Top Speed/Combat Speed

Instead of simply declaring a change from combat speed to top speed or vice versa after movement, in dueling scale combat this change requires the expenditure of an action.

#### Target Acquisition

Before attacking an opponent, a unit must use one action to acquire it as a target. This target remains acquired until the unit's line of sight with the target is broken. A unit may only acquire a limited number of targets. The maximum number of targets that can be acquired simultaneously is equal to the unit's total number of actions per round.

#### Standard Attack

After performing target acquisition, a unit may attack the target with one weapon or set of linked weapons.

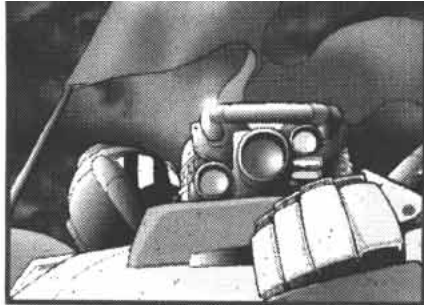
#### Panic Attack

A panic attack consists of an attack performed without first spending an action to acquire the target. Panic attacks suffer a -2 penalty on their attack rolls. If a unit performs three panic attacks against a target without ever losing their line of sight, the target automatically becomes acquired.

#### Activating Auxiliary System

Before using any auxiliary system, such as ECM or active sensors, a vehicle crew must expend one action preparing the system for use. No rolls are made during this action.





## Using Auxiliary System

Once an auxiliary system has been prepared, a vehicle's crew may expend one action to use the system. If the system requires a roll of some sort, it is performed when the action is expended. An auxiliary system may be used multiple combat rounds in a row. If a round goes by without the system being used, the crew must expend one action to prepare it again next time the auxiliary system is to be used.

## Preparing to Embark/Disembark

One action is required to allow a vehicle crew outside their vehicle to prepare to embark. One action is required to allow a vehicle crew inside their vehicle to prepare to disembark.

## Embarking/Disembarking

Once a vehicle's crew has prepared to embark or disembark, one crewmember may enter or exit the vehicle per action expended.

## Warm-Up/Shutdown

Since dueling scale turns are so short, the actual act of starting up a vehicle's engine or shutting it down requires a full action. In most combat situations, all vehicles will already have their engines started, but in some scenarios, a vehicle's crew could begin outside their vehicle. In such cases, treat the crew as a poor quality infantry squad, often with fewer members than usual.

## Extra Actions

In dueling combat, players may NOT elect to take penalties to their action tests in return for extra actions. The timespan involved is just too short.

## Obscurement

Calculate the number of points of obscurement normally, then divide this number by five (round down) to obtain the final obscurement value. This division

represents the fact that each dueling hex would only produce one-fifth the obscurement of a tactical hex.

## Weapon Ranges

All weapon ranges are multiplied by five. Thus a weapon with a tactical scale base range of 1 would have a dueling base range of 5 (short 5, medium 10, long 20, extreme 40). In dueling scale, most combat will take place at short or medium range.

## Target Speed/Ramming

Substitute the following table for the normal target speed/ramming speed table to compensate for the change in scale.

### DUELING SCALE: TARGET SPEED/RAMMING SPEED

Hexes Moved/ Impact Speed	Defense Modifier/ Damage Modifier
0	-3
1-14	-2
15-24	-1
25-34	+0
35-44	+1
45-99	+2
100-499	+3
500-4999	+4

## Area Effect Weapons

All area effect radii are multiplied by five. Thus a weapon with a tactical AE of 1 would have a dueling scale AE of 5.

## Area Effect for Powerful Weapons

Non-area effect ranged weapons with damage multipliers of x20 or greater are considered to have an area effect in dueling scale combat. Weapons with damage multipliers between x20 and x49 have an AE of 0. Weapons with damage multipliers equal or greater than x50 have an AE of 1.

## Saturation Fire

Saturation fire affects five dueling scale hexes for every tactical scale hex that would normally be affected.

## Falling

Divide the altitude in hexes by five to compensate for the difference in scale.

## Firestarting and Destroying Terrain

Halve the damage points required to ignite or destroy terrain.

## Urban Terrain

Normal urban terrain in the dueling scale is considered to be a single building about the size of a house. Dense urban terrain is considered to be a larger, more strongly built building.

Infantry may spend one MP to enter either form of building hex. Vehicles may not normally enter a building hex. If the building has lost one half of its damage points or more, vehicles may enter it at the same movement cost as rough terrain (it has gaping holes in it after all!). The building could lose these damage points as the result of being rammed. Treat house-sized buildings (urban terrain) as a Size 6 vehicle for this purpose. Larger buildings (dense urban terrain) are considered to be Size 12 vehicles. Buildings are considered to have rolled 0 for their defense roll against ramming attacks.

## Obscurement from Urban Terrain

Unlike other terrain types, urban terrain does not divide its Obscurement value by five. Instead it doubles the obscurement value (thus, Urban Terrain = 2, Dense Urban = 4). Buildings are rather hard to shoot through.

Feedback on these rules and the general **Heavy Gear** product line would be greatly appreciated. Send any comment — good or bad — to:

**Heavy Gear**  
Dream Pod 9  
5000 Iberville St.  
Montreal, Quebec  
Canada  
H2H 2S6

## ULTRA MEKTON II

By Richard Holman

Mekton II is an excellent system for creating any kind of Japanese fantasy (or any other fantasy for that matter). It is a nice blank game engine that allows for much more freedom of design than other "universal" systems. The rules we came up with had to be updated to incorporate the Mekton Advanced Construction Manual, but it was worth the effort.

If you haven't caught on, these rules are for simulating shows like Godzilla, Ultraman, Kamen Rider or DynaMan. The giant monster genre is a staple of Japanese science fiction.

### THE ORIGIN OF THE MONSTERS

First off, a setting should be decided. This will be the base of the adventure or campaign. Pick whichever you want; you could also combine two, or come up with new ones. There are several possible ways the monsters ended up in your city.

#### • The Alien Invasion

The bad guys live in UFO's from outer space (or are mutants from the bottom of the sea). They have found that the giant monster is easier to use than to actually build mecha. They may make the creatures cyborgs to give them more power and make them easier to control.

#### • The Evil Secret Organization

The bad guys are humans out to take over the world. They have either found or engineered giant monsters to ravage cities and conduct terrorist raids against people. There are thousands of faceless minions across the world making the heroes' job difficult, for example, by kidnapping the good guy's girl just before the battle.

#### • The Ancient Supernatural Horrors

Weird brain-sucking demons are controlling the monsters (or may themselves BE the monsters). They wake up from ten million years sleep to find that mankind had conquered the world, and plot to relieve humanity of the responsibility.

#### • Nature's Revenge

There is no control for the beasts, they are mutations resulting from pollution, nuclear testing, and toxic waste. It is actually the force of nature fighting back at the destruction that mankind has wrought on the planet.

### TOOLS OF THE TRADE

Once you decided where the monsters are from, the next step is discovering how to destroy them (or control them for those opposed to killing the titanic beasts). Usually there is some sort of special anti-monster branch of the Earth Defense Forces. Many times this is who the PC's will work for, giving them an excuse to be in the middle of the battle. There are several different countermeasures, and ways for the heroes to fight.

#### • Super-Weaponry

This involves using high-tech gadgets to stop a monster. This is best seen in Godzilla films, with the Mazer tanks and other armored vehicles. In this setting, mecha of some sort will be the most common option.

#### • Giant Robots

This differs from the above in many ways. This type of defense usually involves heroes who engage in hand to hand combat with faceless minions before calling on a huge combiner suit to fight the final monster. The PC's will use ninja-like powers to defeat the villains and will conceal their identities under rainbow-colored costumes. This setting best represents shows like DynaMan, Go Ranger or Liveman.

#### • Cyborgs

The PC's are linked to some sort of huge cybernetic being and can unleash its power at a moment's notice. This is the world of Ultraman, Spectreman, and on a smaller (Roadstriker?) scale Kamen Rider.

There are possibly many more, but these are the ones that we are concerned with. If you are using mecha, then generate them normally. If you plan to use Cyborgs, however, use the following rules.

Create the being as you would a mecha. The cyborg may purchase any system except: escape modules, storage spaces, transformations (some GM's may allow it to simulate characters from shows like





**Ambassador Magma**, but it is the GM's decision), and ECM.

Cyborgs *must* purchase Techno-Organics. This is the basic aspect of their nature - they are alive! The Cyborg *must* have a cockpit. This represents the human that is bonded to the creature. The character is in there and is in symbiotic contact with the cyborg. If the cockpit is destroyed, or the pilot hurt or killed, the Cyborg may not transform back to its human form. Transformation is impossible until complete recovery of the host, and never possible if the host dies.

Save for the above restrictions, anything goes. Melee weapons, flight, beastmecha (what if it was Ultramonster Dugula to the rescue?). Go wild, some recommended systems are V-Max, force screens, beam weapons, energy melee weapons, etc.

## BEAUTY OF A BEAST

Building the monsters for your campaign is as important as the heroes. The beasts may be of any origin, but they have one main goal: to destroy mankind. They should be big, bad and ugly. There are two ways to make monsters. One is to make the biggest possible creature using the *Building A Bigger Beast* chapter of the **Mekton Empire** rulebook. The better alternative is the **Mekton Techbook**. Using a process similar to the Cyborg's, construct a beast mecha with the same restrictions as cyborgs. Monsters *must* purchase the Techno Organic systems.

Designers may purchase any weapon they like for their monsters. Missiles and other long-range projectiles can be described as either cyber implants or, even better, as "natural defenses" like quills, throwable claws or exploding feathers. For the most part monsters may not transform (well, they could, but good luck finding an explanation), nor use firearms (flame breath and laser eyes take their place). Monster weapons are usually assumed to be grown by the beast itself, and are "reloaded" after each battle as a normal weapon would.

Monsters may have a cockpit. This represents the brain of the beast. If it is destroyed the beast dies (not the ideal solution if you are running an adventure which requires a live capture). Monsters have two stats, intelligence and luck. Roll 1d6 for both values. Use the higher of the two to determine Mecha Reflex. Cyborgs are based on the host's stats and do not change even if the host dies.

Monsters may be remote-controlled by the invaders. What happens if control is lost? The beast may well continue its rampage, or it may just go to sleep — it is all up to the GM. This should be decided prior to the game, though.

## URBAN RENEWAL — MONSTER STYLE

The heroes should be on hand when all hell breaks loose. If they are EDF troops, they must bravely fight to stop the onslaught, and if they are reporters covering the story, they are out to get exclusive footage. Whatever their motivation, they must always be aware of the fact that they are in constant danger. Buildings will collapse and threaten to bury them in rubble, making the world seem to be coming to an end. If the monster is fighting on a roadstriker scale a **la Kamen Rider**, or **Guyver**, the destruction should be appropriately down-scaled.

The Earth mecha will typically be weaker than the beast. The usual tanks sent to be slaughtered will be reminiscent of the **Godzilla** films (an average tank will be Striker-sized or lighter with virtually no Space Effectiveness). When the situation seems hopeless, the PCs see their chance, either a melding with a cyborg or finding the secret battle machine ready to go.

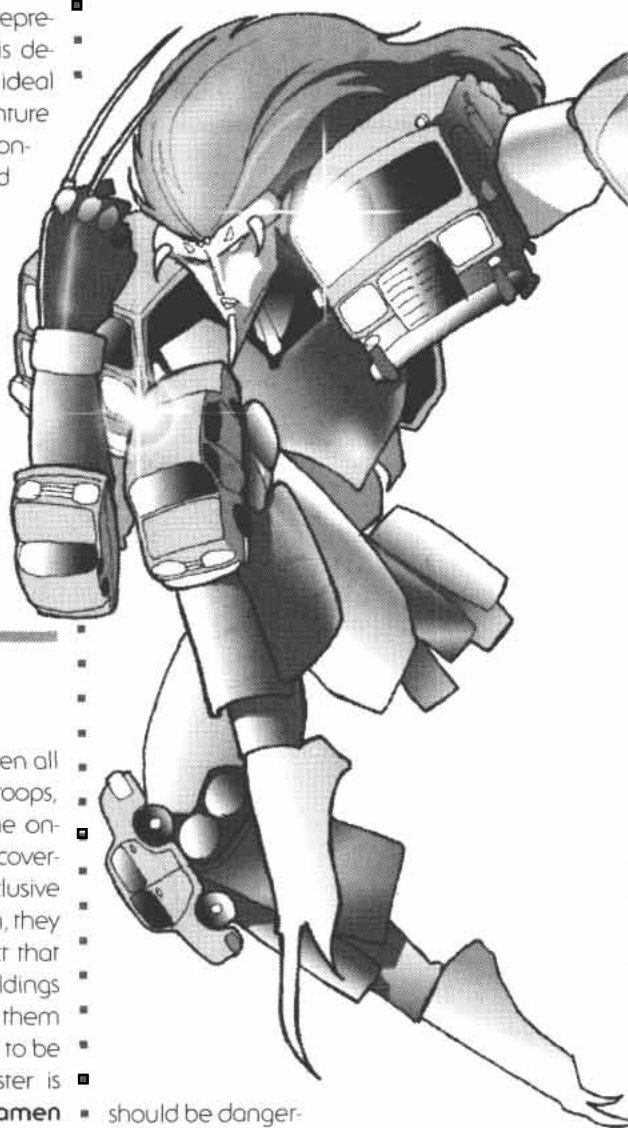
After the monster has trashed the Local Earth Defense Forces, the heroes step in to save the day.

If more than one ultra hero is participating, either use bigger monsters (Corvette scale) or many smaller monsters or a combination of some sort. Monsters

should be dangerous: the heroes should just squeak by and be grateful to be alive.

Monsters should have names and distinguishing characteristics, attacks, smells, sounds, and colors. A player should be able to tell a Mysteraptor from a Kaijusaurus Rex. The odd super-intelligent, talking monster — hurling insults at the heroes as he blows up their favorite restaurant — keeps the game interesting.

Sit down with a good monster flick, and absorb the mood. Now go out there save the world and have fun!



## MECHAZILLA



## MEKTON

## ADAPTATION

By Marc A. Vézina

The mechanical version of the radioactive Godzilla monster has made appearances time and again in the various Japanese monster films of the past decades. Mechazilla has been redesigned several times, and its latest incarnation seemed perfect to illustrate this issue's **Mekton II** article.

The **NewType** magazine of January 1994 provided statistics for the beast as well as a list of its weaponry. Mechazilla is big — really big. Standing 120 meters tall, it weighs in at an amazing 15,482 tons! This gave a lot of room to work with, so the 100 to 1 scale was chosen. The weapons are as follow: a Mega Baster (and not blaster) in the "mouth", a Plasma Grenadier in the middle of the abdomen, Laser Cannons in the "eyes" and Shock Anchors in the hands. Of course, Mechazilla can also engage in hand-to-hand combat.

Two high power beam (or maser) cannons are mounted on a 482 ton air-mobile vehicle which clamps on Mechazilla's back. This fighter/rocket backpack was not presented for simplicity, but it is easy to define in game terms using either the Command Armor rules or the Combiner rules.

**Name:** Mechazilla  
**Tonnage:** 15482  
**Pilot Name:** N/A

**Ground MA:** 4  
**Flight MA:** N/A  
**Maneuver Value:** -10

**Actions Bonus:** 0  
**Scale:** 100/1  
**CPs:** 210,135

### COMPONENTS

Servo Location	Level	Kills	Armor	Type	SP
T	AH	1800	MH	B	800
Head	MH	800	LH	B	700
R&L Arms	MH	900	LH	B	700
R&L Legs	AH	1000	LH	B	700
-	-	-	-	-	-
-	-	-	-	-	-
Powerplant	MGH	2200	-	Cold	-
Hydraulics	-	800	-	Standard	-

### EQUIPMENT

Name	Kills	Game effects
Int. Auto. Protection	-	Torso, Level 5, Portfolio 5
-	-	All Environments
-	-	-
-	-	-
-	-	-
-	-	-

### WEAPONS

Name	WA	Range	Kills/Dam	Shots	Loc	Special
Mega Baster	0	600	400/400	Int.	H	Wide 60°, Warm Up 1
Shock Anchor	0	Melee	100/100	Int.	L. Hand	Shock, Handy
Shock Anchor	0	Melee	100/100	Int.	R. Hand	Shock, Handy
Plasma Grenadier	-1	500	600/600	Int.	T	-
Laser Cannon	+1	800	100/100	Int.	H	AM (Variable)
Laser Cannon	+1	800	100/100	Int.	H	AM (Variable)

### SENSORS

Type	Kills	Range	Comm	Loc
Main	1200	50 Km	Orbit	H
Backup	200	1 Km	300 Km	T

### WEAPON COST

Weapons	CPs
Mega Baster	9.28
Shock Anchor	1.47
Plasma Grenadier	4.48
Laser Cannon	2.3



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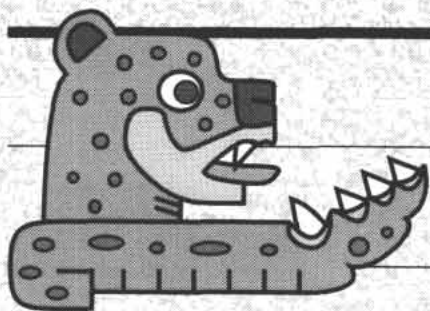
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## HEART OF TEZCATLIPOCA

A Spirit Warrior scenario for Mecha!®

By Marc A. Vezina

Although the uplifted Aztecá cannot design their own armament, they can and do spend considerable amounts of time thinking about new types of weapons, relaying their suggestions to their gods, and hoping their prayers will be answered.

The forces of Chiantico, in their drive for expansion, began to search for new and creative ways to augment the power of their weapons. The warrior-priests noticed that energy was the key to a Warrior Skin's ferocity, and correctly deduced that it could be augmented by fighting closer to the source of said energy. However, not all battles can be fought near Xipe Totec's pyramid, the source of the power of the Spirit Warrior Empire, and the insane priests of the Flayed God who serve as relay cannot always be protected in the midst of an intense fight. To compound the problem, the warrior-priests suggested that special Hearts of Jade be installed at the fringe of Chaintico's territory, serving as batteries to augment the power of the Jaguar Lords' mecha.

And so the rituals began. After many sacrifices and pleas, Tezcatlipoca was pleased and sent hordes of Caretakers to build a first prototype on the edge of the jungle. Soon, a large black pyramid appeared, and the Jaguar Lords looked on with delight. The first Heart of Tezcatlipoca would bring them many more victories!

However, Huitzilopochtli soon took notice of this. Powerless to intervene, he sent ominous dreams into the mind's of his own priests, warning them of the impending danger. A retaliatory strike was mounted hastily, and the battle was joined.

### SCENARIO DESCRIPTION

*This scenario is designed to be played either as a stand-alone game or as a Standard Mission if part of a Spirit Warrior Campaign. If used as part of a campaign, the scenario counts as a Search-and-Destroy mission. If necessary, the Hummingbird Warriors can be replaced by any of the other city-states (except Chiantico, obviously).*

The Heart of Tezcatlipoca is contained within a stone pyramid set at the edge of the jungle, right at the limit of the Jaguars' territory. The Hummingbird Warriors have sent a whole war party to destroy the energy relay before it can be fully activated, depriving the Jaguars' invasion forces of its additional strength and power.

The Jaguars, on the other hand, are ready to furiously defend their newly-acquired instrument of war, obtained from their god only after months of sacrifices and long rituals. They have assigned one of their bravest warriors, Fierce Ocelot, a Knight of the Mountain, as defender. He and his customized Warrior Skin, the Great Jaguar, have been the bane of the Hummingbirds for quite sometime. His death would be most convenient to the Jaguars' enemies, but the Heart of Tezcatlipoca is too important. If need be, Fierce Ocelot is ready to die protecting it!

### OBJECTIVES

**Hummingbird Warriors:** the Heart of Tezcatlipoca must be destroyed. There is only one way to accomplish this: completely destroy the pyramid in which the orb rests. The

secondary objective is, of course, the death of Fierce Ocelot.

**Jaguar Warriors:** the Jaguars must drive off the Hummingbirds without losing the Heart. If possible, Fierce Ocelot must survive, although if he manages to gain at least 30 Experience points before dying, he does not count toward the enemy's Victory points total.

### VICTORY AWARDS

In addition to the normal Victory points for kills, captures and salvages, the following are also awarded:

**Hummingbird Warriors:** if the Heart is destroyed and Fierce Ocelot killed, add 5 Victory points to their total.

**Jaguar Warriors:** if the enemy is repulsed and the pyramid has taken less than four critical hits, add 3 Victory points to their total.

These additional Victory points are ignored if this scenario is played as part of an ongoing campaign.

### TERRAIN

About half the table is covered by trees and vegetation, the rest being an old and hardened lava field with the occasional rocky outcropping. The pyramid containing the Heart of Tezcatlipoca is about 8x8" and is placed roughly near the center of the playing field (see Set-Up, below). It extends up to FB-1.

### BEGINNING FORCES AND SET-UP

The Hummingbird forces start the game with a full 2000-point war party. They are the attacking force and begin the game with control of the first phase sequence. The Jaguars start with only 1000 points, but they automatically get Fierce Ocelot and his Great Jaguar.

If the game table is longer than it is wide, the Hummingbirds will come in from a long end with the pyramid set up approximately 18" from the other end of the table. The Jaguars may set up anywhere in that half of the table. However, they automatically lose control of the first phase sequence, so keep this in mind when setting up.





## MUSCATECH 'MECH RIFLES

By Prabal Nandy

If nothing else, the invasion of the Clans into the Inner Sphere in 3050 has demonstrated the usefulness and the need for dependable, modular weapons systems that can function both as tools of shock and surprise value, and as ways to minimize battlefield downtime due to weapon damage/malfunction.

It is for this reason that MUSCATEch has invested considerable time and resources into the production of rifle upgrade kits, a method for Battletechs to utilize interchangeable rifles on the battlefield, thereby altering their offensive firepower and allowing for easier repair and reloading of their weapons.

The following rules are totally optional and should be used only with the agreement of all players. They are considered Level 3 rules (as per the Battletech Technical Handbook) and are thus not official in any way.

### RIFLES

Standard rifles generally come in 5, 10, 15, and 20-ton packages, though any regular arm-mounted weapon may be converted into a rifle by purchasing a rifle-upgrade kit at the following cost: Weapons Tonnage x 500 C-bills. This in no way changes the performance of the weapon, but allows it to be interchanged on the field for a fresh rifle of the same size.

A rifle may carry any combination of weapons, ammunition, heat-sinks, or armor. All ammo-fed weapons must carry at least one ton of ammunition within the rifle itself (i.e., a 'Mech's internal ammo stores may **not** feed a rifle). Ammunition for weapons not contained in the rifle, electronics gear, C3 units, or anti-missile systems may **not** be contained within a rifle. TAG equipment, however, may be included in a rifle. Artemis FCS or Narc Beacons may be mounted on a rifle, but may be used only for missile weapons contained within that rifle.

Heatsinks may be added to a rifle to make up for some of its generated heat. The heatsinks must be of the same type as that of the 'Mech carrying the rifle, otherwise they are rendered nonfunctional.

### REQUIREMENTS

To be fitted for a rifle, a 'Mech must allocate critical spaces in its arm locations as for a normal weapons combination. The 'Mech may **not** remove any of its arm actuators to make further room for the rifle. Therefore the maximum amount of room a rifle may occupy is 8 Critical spaces. The 'Mech may place its full complement of armor on its arm, but must allocate free ton-

nage equal to the weight of its rifle to be able to use it (as for a normal weapon).

The 'Mech's hand actuator is taken up by sensitive rifle interfacing equipment and is designed for holding and replacing rifles only. It cannot be used to pick up objects and can only be used to punch with a +1 to hit modifier. Any 'Mech that uses a rifle must be equipped with this equipment, which costs 5000 C-bills per modified hand actuator.

Any 'Mech that has a functioning hand actuator and wishes to use a rifle may do so, but with a +2 to hit modifier for the weapons mounted on that rifle.

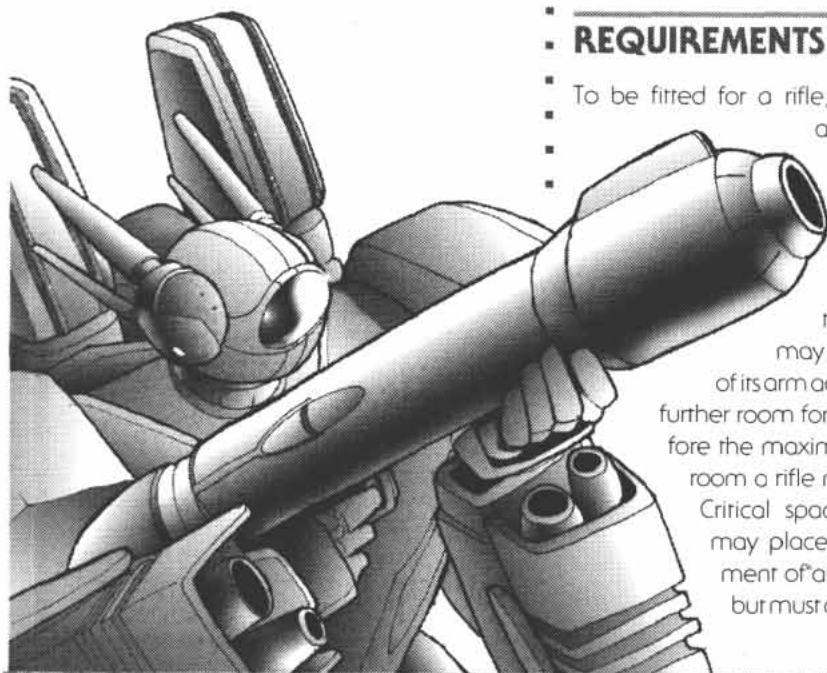
### HITS AND DAMAGE

Hits on an arm location are treated as normal. The rifle is considered protected by the surrounding armor of the arm, and no special modification of the rules is necessary regarding its critical locations. Rifles that contain additional armor for the arm location have their armor deducted first, before damage penetrates to the 'Mech's arm. The damage is treated as if solely done to the armor of the rifle. Ammunition detonation occurs as normal, doing damage to the arm carrying the rifle and then to the rest of the 'Mech as appropriate. Hits to the 'Mech's arm actuators create penalties for the use of the rifle as normal, but a hit to the 'Mech's hand actuator damages the rifle interface machinery and therefore has the added effect of making it impossible for the 'Mech to use or drop the rifle it is currently carrying.

### USE OF RIFLES

For all normal battlefield purposes, weapons and attacks launched by a rifle are treated as for standard arm-mounted weapons.

At any point in the battle, if the 'Mech's interfacing hand actuator is still operational, the 'Mech may elect to drop its rifle. This procedure takes 1 round to execute, during which the weapons mounted on the rifle may not be fired. The rifle falls into the hex the 'Mech is





standing in when the drop round was completed. If the 'Mech's hand actuator is hit before the end of the weapons firing phase, the dropping operation is jammed midway, and the rifle may not be fired or dropped for the duration of the battle. If a 'Mech's arm has been blown off during battle (and the hand actuator has not been hit specifically), the rifle that was carried in that arm is considered dropped and may be picked up as for a regular rifle.

At any point in the battle, a 'Mech may elect to pick up a rifle. Picking up a rifle requires two rounds of time (during which the 'Mech must remain within the hex that the rifle was in, though it may make facing changes), and **two** functioning hand actuators (one of which must be equipped with a rifle interface). Since the rifle interface carrying hand may not lift objects, it is highly suggested that 'Mechs do not equip both hand actuators with rifle interfaces, which would prevent a 'Mech from being able to pick up a rifle.

In addition, at the end of the two rounds (prior to the next movement phase), the 'Mech must make a 6 or better on a 2D6 for a to-drop roll. If the roll fails, the rifle falls back into the original hex that it was in. Only upgraded rifles may be picked up. Regular rifles, such as the ones used by *Stringers*, *Battlemasters* or other 3025 'Mechs are fused to the arm and may not be removed during battles.

## RELOADING

At any point in the battle, a 'Mech may elect to reload ammunition clips for its ammo-fed weapons. Ammo clips may be carried as internal or external cargo. They may not be used for on-board weaponry, but otherwise there are no penalties for clipped ammunition. This requires **two** functioning hand actuators, and three rounds during which none of the weapons on the rifle may fire. After reload, a loading roll of 4 or better on a 2D6 must be made for the ammunition to have been reloaded properly. If the roll fails, the ammunition jams and the ammo weapon that fed from it is ren-

dered nonfunctional for the duration of the battle.

## MOVEMENT MODIFIERS

If a 'Mech picks up and uses a rifle of the same size (tonnage) as the rifle it is "fitted" for, it may use it with no penalty. If a 'Mech uses a rifle of size larger than that it was outfitted for, its speed is reduced as follow:

Engine rating + ('Mech tonnage [w/o rifle] + rifle tonnage) = new Walking speed, rounded up

A lighter rifle does not confer any special speed bonus. If necessary, the maximum jumping range should be reduced to remain equal to the new Walking speed.

Example: a *Stringer* outfitted with a rifle upgrade drops its Medium Laser rifle (spending 1 round) to pick up a modified Phoenix Hawk's ER Large Laser rifle. This procedure requires two rounds, after which the *Stringer*'s speed is reduced to 5-8-5:

120 Engine + (20 tons - 1 ton + 5 tons).

After the two rounds, the *Stringer* may fire the ERLL normally.

If the *Stringer* had not been equipped with an upgraded hand actuator, or if it

had carried the ERLL in its non-modified left hand, it would have had a +2 To hit modifier for the ERLL in addition to the speed loss.

If the *Stringer* had decided to pick up a modified Wolverine's Ultra AC-5 rifle (10 tons) instead of the ERLL, its speed would have been reduced to 4-6-4.

## ARM-STABILIZED WEAPONS

'Mechs with a rifle-mounted weapon may choose to stabilize that weapon for firing with a free arm, giving them a -1 to hit (with the stabilized weapon only). For example, a *Griffin* may choose to stabilize its right-arm mounted PPC with its left arm, minimizing vibrations and thereby make aiming easier.

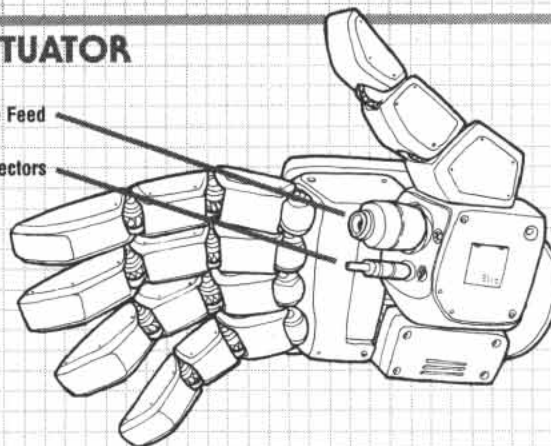
To stabilize a weapon, the player must first designate a single arm weapon to stabilize. The weapon will be supported by the opposing arm, which may not fire any of its weapons or conduct physical attacks during that attack phase. All arm actuators must be present and undamaged on the stabilizing arm. The stabilized weapon then gains a -1 to hit for the turn it is fired stabilized.

Arm weapons firing into side arcs may not be stabilized.

## RIFLE ACTUATOR

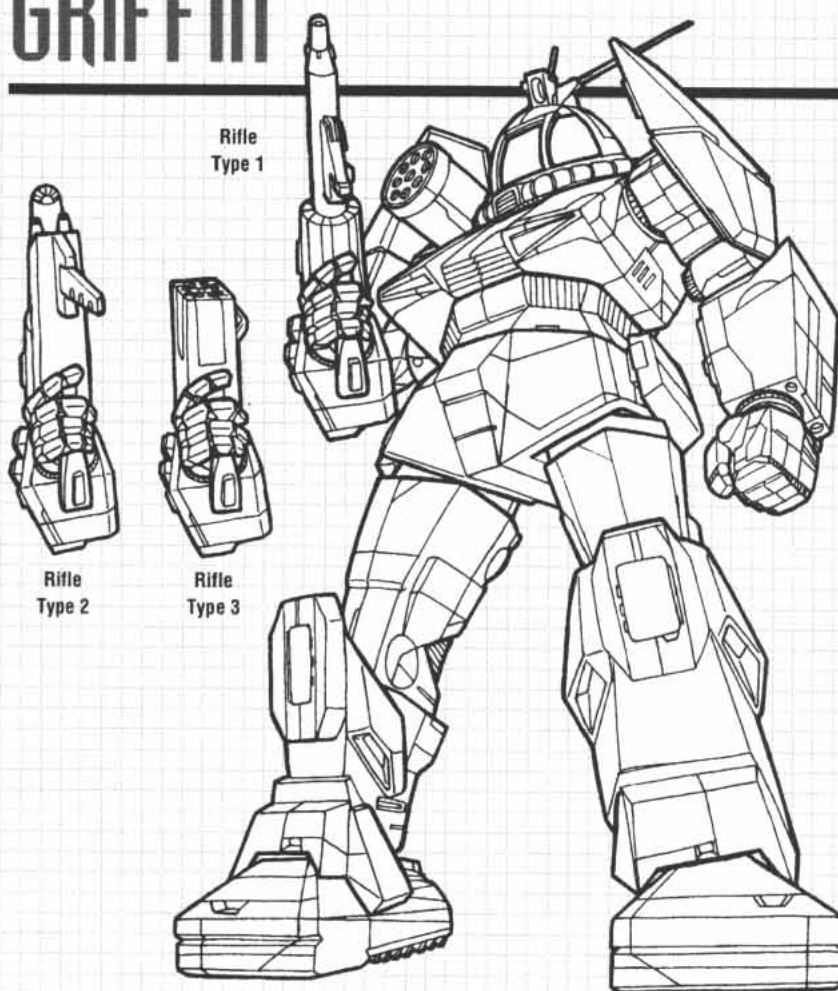
Coolant Exchange Feed

Data/Power Connectors



This is a close-up view of the basic rifle interface provided by MUSCATech. The internal forearm unit is not shown for simplicity. Note the coolant exchange and data feeds that allow the properly connected rifle to use the 'Mech on-board systems to cool and direct its weapon(s).

## GRF-1RU GRIFFIN



## TECHNICAL READOUT

By Marc A. Vezina

- The need for additional combat units to use against the Clans has caused several old designs to be pressed back into service, hastily refurbished with new technology. Among these, the venerable 3025-tech *Griffin* was an excellent candidate for the new rifle actuator update, since it already used a primitive form of the concept to mount its right arm PPC.
- The GRF-1RU's basic structure remains unchanged. It is still powered by the reliable and efficient CoreTek fusion engine which contributed to the success of the "classic trio": *Wolverine*, *Shadow Hawk* and *Griffin*. Likewise, the LRM 10 launcher is still present on the right shoulder, ready to provide long range firepower.
- The most radical change lies in the machine's right forearm. An all-new assembly is manufactured separately and shipped to front-line units and garrisons, who then simply exchange the old one for the rifle-holding model. The whole operation can even take place on the field, provided a friendly 'Mech with hands is ready to assist.
- Three standard rifle models already exist, though new designs will doubtlessly be available in the coming months. There are rumors of an over-weight missile rifle to transform the 'Mech into a fire support vehicle, but the loss of speed and the additional strain on the frame will probably discourage potential users.

## TECHNICAL READOUT

**Mass:** 55 Tons  
**Chassis:** Earthwerk GRF w/ Rifle Actuator  
**Power Plant:** CoreTek 275  
**Cruising Speed:** 57.1 kph  
**Maximum Speed:** 81.5 kph  
**Jump Jets:** Rawling 55  
**Jump Capacity:** 150 Meters  
**Armor:** Starshield A  
**Armament:**  
     1 MUSCA Tech Series C Rifle Mount  
     1 Delta Dart LRM10  
**Manufacturer:**  
     Various, usually Earthwerks, Inc.  
**Communication System:**  
     Various, usually Neil 6000  
**Targeting and Tracking System:**  
     Various, usually Octagon Tartrac, System C

### TYPE: GRF-1RU Griffin

Equipment:		Mass
Internal Structure :		5.5
Engine:	275	15.5
Walk:	5	
Run:	8	
Jump:	5	
Heat Sinks:	12	2
Gyro:		3
Cockpit:		3
Armor Factor:	152	9.5
	Internal Structure	Armor Value
Head:	3	9
Center Torso:	18	20/7
Rt./Lt. Torso:	13	20/6
Rt./Lt. Arm:	9	14
Rt./Lt. Leg:	13	18

### WEAPONS AND AMMO:

Type	Loc	Crit	Tonnage
Rifle Mount	RA	1-8	7
LRM 10	RT	2	5
Ammo (LRM) 24	RT	2	2
Jump Jets	RT	2	1
Jump Jets	LT	3	1
Jump jets	CT	1	0.5
<b>Rifle Type One</b>			
PPC	Rifle	3	7
<b>Rifle Type Two</b>			
Large Laser	Rifle	2	5
2x Medium Laser	Rifle	2	2
<b>Rifle Type Three</b>			
4x Streak SRM 2	Rifle	1	6
Ammo (SRM) 50	Rifle	1	1



## SENSORY FEEDBACK

Welcome to *Sensory Feedback*, Mecha Press's brand new letter column. It is intended to be a public forum for the expression of our readers, so don't hesitate to send in your letters. Because we do not have much space, we ask that letters be concise (so we can cram more of them in the page).

Send your letters to *Sensory Feedback*, 5000 Iberville, Suite 332, Montreal, Quebec, Canada, H2H 2S6. Or you can Email them to us at either <vman@coffehaus.com> or <dp9@coffehaus.com>; please indicate at the top of your post that your letter is intended for publication. If you want your name and address withheld, also write it down. Thanks!

**Dear Sir,**

(...) Do you have any plans for articles on SPT Layzner, Z Gundam, ZZ Gundam and Macross/Robotech and a continuation on the article you did on *Space Cruiser Yamato*? Do you have plans for covering both V and G Gundam?

Yours sincerely,

**Philip Reeder  
Nr Rotherham, England**

We started the V Gundam coverage last issue, with Part II coming up in issue #19. The following series are also in our line-up of future subjects: *Macross Plus* (#18), *Macross 7*, *SPT Layzner*, *Z Gundam* (and that's a monster, three-part project!), *ZZ Gundam* and a second *Spaceship Special*. We have no plans to feature *G Gundam* as a cover story, however. Maybe a *Mecha Story* special column. What say the readers?

I received the next opinion over the Internet. Since a great deal of our readership does not seem to have access to this source of information, I intend to

devote a small corner of this page to a "letter" from the Net from now on (provided I receive some, of course).

**Dear MP,**

Mecha shows aren't the same anymore. Back in the golden days of anime (the 80s), mecha shows were great. We had *Zeta Gundam* and *Double Zeta Gundam* all in one year. Other notable shows included *Metal Armor Dragonar* and *Armored Trooper Votoms*. Shows these days are no more than commercials for their PARA MODELS (plastic models or toys).

I'm not saying commercialism is bad or anything. But the original plots and the lack of subliminal advertising is what got me attracted to Japanese TV anime in the first place. For instance, take a look at shows like *Kidouboudouken G Gundam*. This show is obviously not Gundam-related whatsoever. In fact, it is the ANTI-Gundam. But then why create a show using the name of Gundam but not relate it to Gundam in any way? Well it's simple: \$\$\$\$\$\$. I don't know about you, but I saw ads for the G Gundam models way before the actual series started. So in my opinion, mecha shows of today lost their flair for originality and story due to the greed for more \$\$\$\$.

Funny enough though, I loved *Mobile Suit V Gundam*...

**Phillip "Kamisama" Yee  
<phillyee@ranma.stanford.edu>**

**Dear Sirs,**

I picked up a copy of your publication (issue #9) a few months ago. I thought it was a very good sci-fi magazine, even though the robot pictures in the middle took too much space in my opinion (these pages would have been better used by more spaceship pictures).

My local store then skipped the following issues up to #12, which I saw recently. Much to my dismay, there were even more robots in there. Why devote so much space to something so inherently ridiculous as a giant robot when you could use the pages for more believable science-fiction? You have a very nice

magazine there, and I for one would keep buying it if there were more spaceships and modeling material.

**Gregory Douglas  
New York, NY**

*I just had to include that one in the line-up, if only as a counterpart to my editorial. Still, everybody's entitled to his opinion, and while I disagree with Mr Douglas, I can understand his point. After all, "mecha" stands for "mechanical", not "giant robot", ne?*

**Sirs,**

[...] You publish an excellent magazine. I am especially interested in the Mecha drawings, specs, & history. Also, your figure reviews. I hope that you take a look at the line of science-fiction tanks and ships Geo-Hex is putting out. They are excellent.

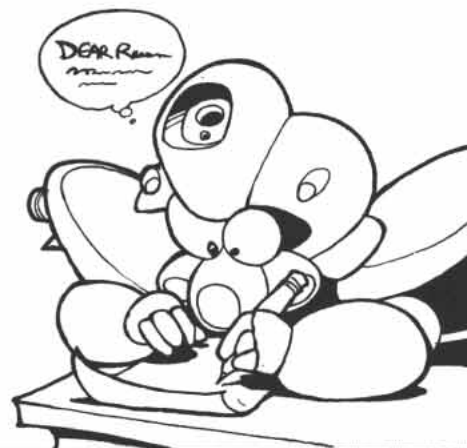
Thank you,

**Jonathan A. Miller  
Marion, Ohio**

P.S. What other issues of Mecha Press are actually still available? And when will *Heavy Gear* be out?

*I might do a review of the models you suggested, provided I can get my hands on some. They are actually miniatures for Ground Zero's Dirtside II and Full Thrust games (see review of DII on page 37). We still have copies of Mecha Press 0, 6, 7, 9-12, 14-16 — all others are completely sold out. Heavy Gear will be around soon by the time you read this.*

Well, that's it for this issue. We'll be waiting for your letters!

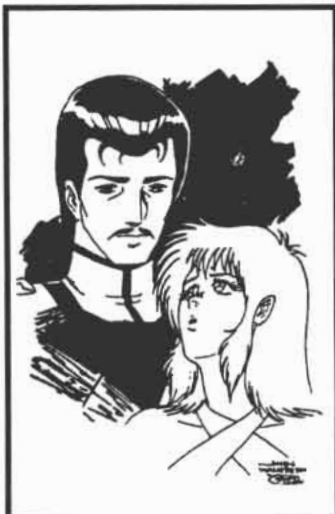


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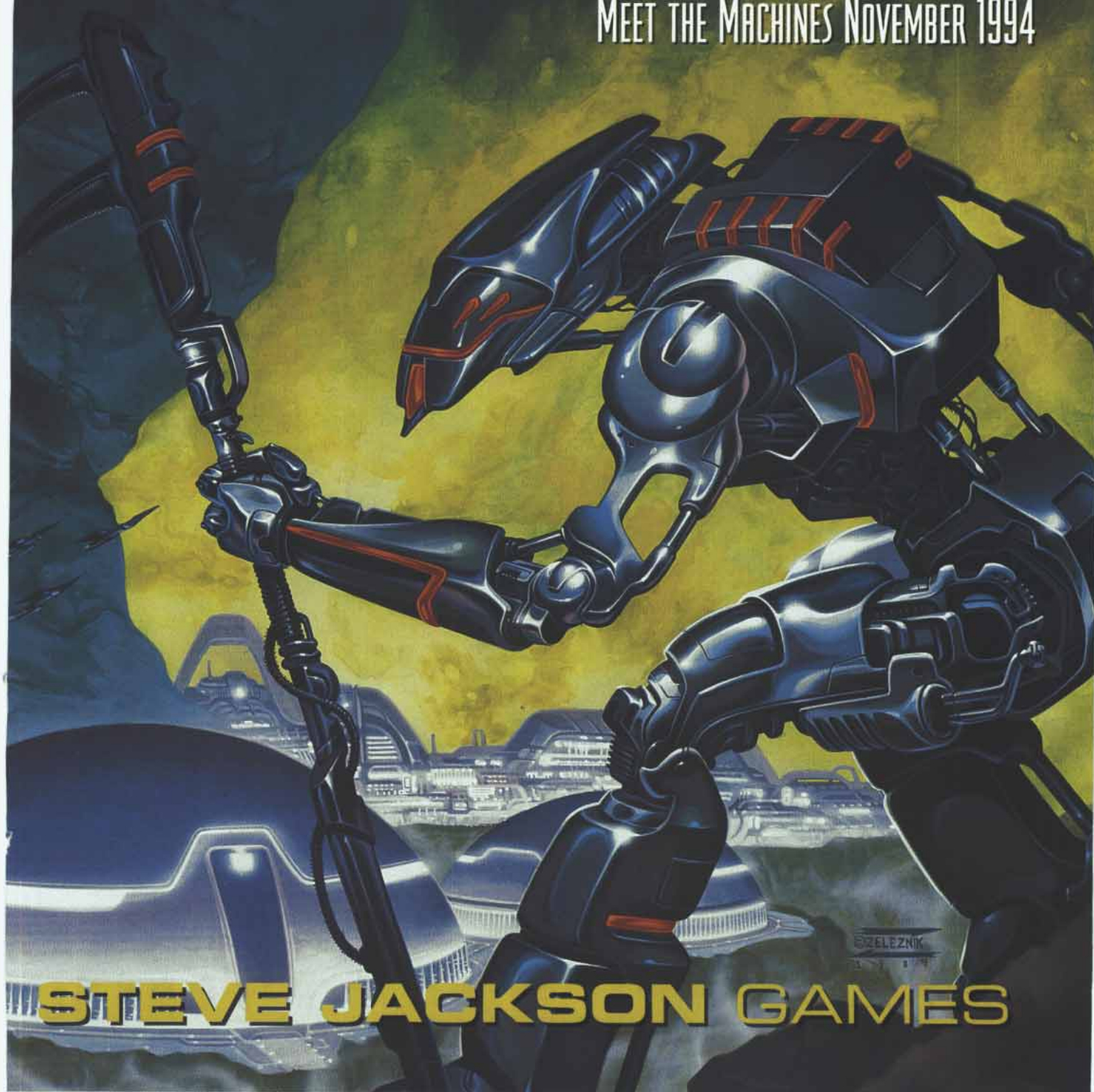


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